

JUANA
OF
CASTILE

MAY EARLE



Class PR 6009

Book A64 J8

1911

JUANA OF CASTILE

JUANA OF CASTILE

BY
MAY EARLE
11

NEW YORK
JOHN LANE COMPANY
MCMXI

PR 6009
A 64 J 8
1911

Printed in England

GIN

Publisher

JUL 1 1911



2/50 and Postage 100

PROLOGUE

A

JUANA OF CASTILE

JUANA OF CASTILE, daughter of Ferdinand and Isabella of Spain, was born at Toledo in 1480 and married Philippe (le Bel) Archduke of Burgundy in 1503. She spent the earlier years of her marriage in Ghent, where her son (afterwards Charles V. of Austria) was born. Juana loved her husband most passionately and lived only to please him. She was intellectual, musical, winning, tender, handsome and hazel-eyed, though marred by an excessively yellow complexion. Philippe had every beauty of physical appearance, and every kingly grace, but was shallow-hearted, and an unfaithful husband, yet the more shamefully he treated his wife yet the more she loved him, deploring his absences and often greeting with open joy his returns, notwithstanding that she within herself possessed the pure Castilian pride. Her accesses of jealousy (unhappily too well founded), mingled with reproach, love, and entreaty, at length wearied him.

Isabella of Castile, her mother, having appointed Philippe and Juana heirs presumptive to the throne of Spain, they visited that country to receive preliminary honours. The agonies of Juana's jealousy—with regard specially to one lady of her own Court—now became so great that they seemed almost to unseat her reason; and when Philippe, despite his perfect knowledge of her inability to accompany him (owing to her state of health at that time), insisted on leaving Spain for Burgundy on some unnecessary pretext of Court affairs, a deep melancholy, bordering on madness, ensued. She set out alone one winter night in her thin white samite robe, after the rest of the household had gone to bed, intent on following him and, when she was discovered, she refused to re-enter, and remained shivering at the barred gates of the gardens the whole night. After the birth of her second son

JUANA OF CASTILE

she rejoined Philippe in Flanders, where his affection appearing less cold she became happier, but a return of lightness and neglect on his part brought back the old jealousy and anguish, mingled with the mental disturbance which by some authorities has been considered insanity. Her mother seems to have feared the same thing, for she appointed Ferdinand Regent, though this may have been solely due to political reasons connected with the Church. After Isabella's death Philippe and Juana left Flanders for Spain; but in the course of the voyage were shipwrecked on the British coast, and through stress of weather delayed some months; being royally welcomed and entertained by the English Court;—there fresh proofs of Philippe's infidelity renewed once more the agony of Juana. During the few following years he at times pretended to reconciliations (for political reasons of his own) but at others treated her with neglect and scorn. At last in Castile an open and avowed rupture took place between them. Philippe shortly afterwards died at Burgos, his illness only having lasted a few days, throughout which Juana never left his side, and after his death still remained immovable beside the corpse, having to be beguiled away during the process of embalming, and on her return refusing to leave the body which she persisted in disbelieving dead, and treated in all respects as if alive; nor would she for a full year consent to its being buried, even commanding the Cortes to do it the customary annual homage as to Philippe when living.

After the expiration of the year she allowed the body to be taken to the Cartuja at Miraflores, and subsequently was persuaded to permit the funeral *cortège* to start for Granada (where the tomb was being carved); but before doing so she insisted upon having the coffin opened that she might once

JUANA OF CASTILE

more see her husband's face, and then herself accompanied the *cortège*, stipulating that it should always proceed by night, and following close to the bier and remaining with it. On one occasion, finding that by mistake the halting-place had been fixed in a nunnery instead of a monastery her frenzied fear lest any other woman should approach the corpse culminated in a wild scene, during which she insisted on the immediate removal of the bier into the open waste country and in the freezing winter dawn had the coffin re-opened (thus to assure herself that the body of Philippe had not been removed); and a requiem Mass sung by the priests accompanying her. At Tordesillas she was met by her father (Ferdinand, now Regent), who persuaded her to retire into the Castle there, and to allow the catafalque to be placed in the convent of Santa Clara opposite her windows.

She remained at Tordesillas twenty-five years, without ever going beyond the precincts of the palace, and died thanking God that her life was at length over. She was in some sense an agnostic (probably owing to the ordeals of the Inquisition she had witnessed, which had set her tender loving nature against any God whose priests could serve Him by such rites, and likewise to the influence of the "Friends of Light,") but toward the end of her sad life her own experience led her to take a different view of Christianity, and she evinced signs of embracing it anew.

Some authorities have supposed that the ambition of Philippe and Ferdinand magnified, or even created the existence of Juana's mental alienation, in order to prevent her reigning as Queen, and that, after Philippe's death, from the same motive Ferdinand succeeded in arranging that she should continue to live at Tordesillas; but the

JUANA OF CASTILE

whole political question is too much involved and too unnecessary for the portrayal of Juana's life in love to call for any special discussion here.

(The early years of the sixteenth century being those of the Renaissance in Spain, and of the fall of Granada and final conquest of the Moors, the fascination that Arabian magic had for Juana, and both her own and Philippe's use of Hellenic similes are sufficiently accounted for.)

BOOK I

JUANA OF CASTILE

JUANA awakes at Lille, on the morning of her marriage with Philippe (le Bel), Archduke of Burgundy; she spends the early hours alone. The wedding ceremony. The first happy years of their married life in Belgium. Her agnostic views and evident intercourse with the "Friends of Light" (a body of broad-minded and scholarly men, who arose in antagonism to the priesthood during the reign of Ferdinand and Isabella, and revived the love of Greek and Oriental study in Spain, together with a freer theology).

JUANA OF CASTILE

My heart wakes ; I wake to the singing
Of birds in green pleasance and wold ;
The song that through Eden was ringing
When Isha there wakened of old,
Soft wondering, to life, and uplifted
Her eyes in the Garden of Love :
Thus I, with new life newly gifted
Wake here to the rapture thereof.

O life that is love ! O sweet madness
Of love that is life ! on mine eyes
New regions of beauty and gladness
Loom fair, and in roseate skies
The sun, with strange glory of seven,
Rekindles ; stars hymn the new Earth ;
Sons of God shout for joy in mid-heaven,
And Sorrow laughs griefless as Mirth.

Hush thee, throb not so loudly O heart,
For my maidens yet sleep ;
Lest at sound of thy throbbing they start
From their dreams ; let us keep
This new world of our love, alone ours
Thus awhile ; let us wend
Through the gardens and groves, where strange flowers
Bud and bloom without end.

The green plain is one transport of Spring ;
In the copse coos the dove ;

JUANA OF CASTILE

Winds, woodlands, meads, rivulets sing,
And each song is of love ;
The new Earth thrills from pleasance to pole,
Laughs from east unto west ;
With the god who informs my own soul
In like wise possessed.

Lord and life of our life, that by thine
Was quickened to birth ;
Philippe, Heart of the heart which is mine
And which throbs through the Earth ;
Lord of love, and my love's lord and king,
Chosen queen by thine own,
I behold in this rapture of Spring
Thee, dearest, alone.

Joy-bells through Burgundy ringing ;
Ringing throughout the new world ;
Blare of loud trumpets ; soft singing :
Blazon of banners unfurled.
Knights of Bourgogne, Knights Castilian,
Robed in rare tissues of gold,
Follow my lord, as at Ilion
Knights the fair Paris of old.

Maidens of Burgos flower-laden ;
Maidens of France : side by side
Many a lovely Basque maiden
Strewing a path for the Bride.

JUANA OF CASTILE

It is for me ? As one dreaming
Day-dreams apart I behold
Rapt in sweet vision, some gleaming
Pageant of Hymen unfold,
While the old charm of wrought paces,
Hands interwaving, doth weave
O'er me its spell ; 'mid all faces
One face alone I perceive,
Hear but one voice 'mid all voices ;
Blind thus and deaf evermore
Unto all else, life rejoices
In me as never before.

Joy-bells in Flanders ; replying
Joy-bells from distant Castile ;
Bells in the new world outvying
Even their jubilant peal :
Blest by the Priest's consecration
Here in the Temple of Love,
One through the great affirmation
Made at the Altar thereof ;
Song Hymeneal ascending
Around us to gladden our way,
Philippe and I pass forth, wending
Unto new life and new day.

He wakes not yet ; my life still sleeps with him ;
While from the oriel on lush pastures, dim
In the grey dawn and sweet with dews, I gaze ;

JUANA OF CASTILE

A myriad drowsy flowers their petals raise
For joy of the new sun ; mine tarries still,
Philippe yet sleeps, but Love's wide heavens thrill
With prescience of the day enkindling there ;
How fair he is ! Hyperion-like, his hair
Rays his head round with lambent flame, his eyes
Veil their empyreal splendours till he rise,
Re-issuing as the sun-god from the East ;
Upon his slumbering face my sight I feast,
And verily some mortal maiden seem
By an immortal loved in waking dream.
Ev'n now he stirs, arousing from his sleep,
And to myself recalled once more I keep
Watch o'er the homage of my heart, and play
Queen to his Subject as is woman's way.

Dawn yet again ; each day seems but one hour ;
The matin-bell from Bavon's grey old tower
Rouses the city, calling men to Mass ;
People and priests in festal raiment pass
Down the dim streets, where bud and blossom sway ;
Festooned in dewy fragrance o'er their way.
Gand offers loyal welcome ; but its bell
Mocks like fiends' laughter echoing from hell ;
For in Castile I oft have heard before
That sound (a Tyrian drum of Baal-Tsor)
Summon to death and all dread pangs thereof,
In the great name of God—the God of Love !
Hence as I listen abhorrence fills my heart
And burning wrath ; nor lot is mine nor part

JUANA OF CASTILE

In this false cult ; my mother's missal lies
Discarded at my side, tears blind mine eyes,
The city's joy wakes sorrow ; did I go
With Philippe to the Palace Chapel, lo
The consecrated Feast were unto me
A table of devils ;—" God's ? " No God can be
In any wise where love is not ; and there
Of those Inquisitorial fires aware,
In the uplifted Host I should but see
A ruthless Presence of cold cruelty.
Nay rather like Carillo I will play
With magic in Alcala ; prostrate pray
With Moslems in the mosques of Andalus,
Than join in Roman rite or worship thus.
But I believe not in the God of priests,
I scorn their fasts, I shudder at their feasts,
And, saving Love be Lord, belief have none
In any God, else were my life undone ;
Yet if Love be not God, strike then God's knell,
There is none other, this I know right well.

Spring with green buds, and Summer with her flowers,
Autumn with ripened fruit in orchard bowers,

Gone from us, Philippe, ere we knew them there,
Still leaving in its spring this love of ours.

Dark night descends ; outside the chill winds blow,
Heavy, half-strangled with impending snow ;

Their stifled moan appals me, as it were
The wail of Love, in some dumb passion of woe.

JUANA OF CASTILE

Let us not listen longer, oftentimes thus
Strange fancies haunt me, baleful, ominous ;
 And formless ills, at which I shudder blind,
With darkling pinions overshadow us.

But here with you all evil things take flight,
And spread their bat-like wings toward banished night ;
 What unto us is the wild winter wind
Here in the ruddy warmth, the soft low light ?

See how the brazier's flickering shadows dance
O'er the dim arras ! damsels of Romance,
 Knights, deities, allured there from the dead,
Stir in the shifting glamour and advance ;

Your head lies on my breast, your glittering hair,
Flung back, outshines the gold brocade I wear ;
 Your arms about me, what have I to dread ?—
—This love of ours is grown too great to bear ;

Let us outwit our hearts by fantasy
And live as lovers from the tapestry ;
 “ Yea so (you say), for here in blissful wise
As yon Endymion I repose, and see

“ In you Diana who above me bends,
With pale immortal face whose light transcends
 All mortal dreams of love ; and deep dark eyes
Where fleeting fire with fire perpetual blends ;

JUANA OF CASTILE

“ And after day’s long weary parching drouth
My lips—insatiate still—drink from her mouth,
That like some soft red opening bud doth gleam
Here in a fragrance of the Carian South :

“ But your own laughter sweet and tremulous,
Back to ourselves, my queen, allureth us.”

Ev’n so, ere long the firelight-spell supreme,
Enchanted other loves we love through thus.

In eastern bowers we hear the bulbuls call,
While on our lips the broken rise and fall
Of that half wordless speech none understands,
Save they who kindle it, outpassions all.

Tristram and Iseult of the tapestry
Its loving-cup we drink unwittingly ;
Then sit together, hands in fervent hands,
Forgetful of Tintagel’s looming sea.

Medea and Jason, with the golden fleece
We sail from Colchis—nay, let fancy cease,
Afar I see Corinthian Creusa’s face
And from hell-flame my heart finds no release.

The shadowy spell, Belov’d, is broken so ;
We waken to the brazier’s dying glow,
The darkening arras, and in this embrace
Our own, the sweetest of all loves, we know.

*

JUANA OF CASTILE

It is enough, we can no more than this ;
All fires of Earth, all fires of Heaven kiss
At these our lips ; in some empyreal dream
Beings enkindled of pure flame we seem ;
Of very Love our lives are pulsing fires ;
Assuaged our dumb tempestuous desires,
Our passionate yearnings, our volcanic strain
Toward some consummation sought in vain ;
Unrest is o'er ;
It is enough, Beloved, what can we more ?

Silence awhile for utter joy we keep ;
Could we draw tears from Earth's unfathomed Deep,
Or spherulal laughters lure on lightning wing
(While scarce our lips cease thus to meet and cling) ;
Or find wild words of some divine strange speech,
Not even these its height and depth might reach ;
The fire of our own love around, above,
Beneath us throbs ; yea, we ourselves are love—
Love ;—even the blind
And cold philosophies deem matter mind.

O crowning ecstasy, supreme and strange,
As living flames our beings interchange,
For mine thy pulses throb, and in my breast
Thy heart beats ; by thy soul mine is possessed ;
Yea thou art I, and in some wondrous wise,
I too am thou ; yet on my hair and eyes
Thy kisses burn ; one fire we are and twain
Flames that commingle and dispart again :
My life, my lord,
It is enough, could æons more accord ?

JUANA OF CASTILE

Here in mine oratory,
Held sacred from far days
To God's cold distant glory,
My heart's Lord, Love, I praise ;
And where the Queen, my Mother,
Would have me meditate
I muse on themes far other
Than those deemed consecrate.
On Philippe's words I ponder,
Tones, looks, traits manifest,
And weigh and dream and wonder
How I may meet them best ;
How best forestall the unspoken,
Unseen ; how with no sign,
Nor any faintest token
By love itself divine ;
Of sorrow and of gladness
My life knows only his ;
Joy other, hope, fear, sadness,
Meseemeth none there is ;
My life by that proceeding
From his lips draws its breath,
Life else in no wise heeding,
Vain were it, void as death.

For freedom joy long panted,
Winged, pent within my breast,
Song o'er, Te Deum chanted
Still left it unexpressed ;

JUANA OF CASTILE

A bird encaged it fluttered
Blind pinions at the bars ;
Maddened because unuttered
Pining for sun and stars.

But while my court musicians
In the rose-garden play,
Freed as by some magician's
Charmed rhythm it soars away ;

High in Love's empyrean,
A lark that finds full voice,
It carols—a wild pæan
That would the world rejoice—

Here lost in dream I hearken ;
Play on, O minstrels play,
Or Love's bright heaven will darken
Around its lapsing lay.

Now like some Lydian measure
Of golden Grecian days,
To rhythmic, raptured pleasure
The changing cadence sways,

And as the strain entrances
Yet more, alone, apart,
I dance—a child who dances
For very joy of heart :

JUANA OF CASTILE

Too soon the allegretto
By minor chords descends ;
Strays through a sad larghetto,
And my glad dancing ends.

A prophecy of sorrow
Burdens the melody,
Dim as a far dread morrow
Whose dawn may never be.

Yet tears are mine for laughter,
And sadness for delight ;
Cease, minstrels, cease ;—yea after
The day I know comes night—

How shall I find a voice to tell
Him whom I love, my love ?
Unto myself I speak it well,
Unto him naught thereof.

Songs of the flaming planet-fires,
Pæans of winds and seas,
Would lend me aid ; but he desires
A lighter voice than these.

Hearts so diverse, what god at will
Fashions them thus, none knows ;
Mine of the tempest never still,
His of the calm's repose.

JUANA OF CASTILE

How shall we speak then each with each ?
How shall we kissing meet ?
Of all thy voices, Nature, teach
Me one reposeful, sweet.

Whisper of zephyrs, south and west ;
Cooing of mated doves ;
Murmur of wavelets round a nest
Of little halcyon loves.

Lend me a voice like unto these
Tranquil, alluring, light,
Tender, a voice of joyous ease,
That I may speak to-night.

JUANA OF CASTILE

*All the birds have found a nest
All their little loves at rest ;
Through the live-long day they sing,
Flitting hither, flitting thither,
Scarce, for rapture, knowing whither ;
Rosy larches, May's white hedges
Greenwood alleys, river sedges
Focund with their warbling ring :
Under heaven's blue expanse
In the fields the zephyrs dance
With the sunbeams and the flowers,
But the song of love surpasses
All the bird-songs ; and more airy
Than the dance of flower, or fairy,
Its glad dance amid the grasses.*

BOOK II



JUANA OF CASTILE

COURT *fête* in Brussels on the anniversary of their marriage when Philippe's attention to a lady of Juana's suite first troubles her unbroken happiness. She muses on the difference between man and woman's love. Short absence of Philippe and vivid awakening of her doubts. Their letters. A troubled night.

JUANA OF CASTILE

In Brussels at the Court of Flanders
Behold us now ; the Senne meanders
Through barren plains low down from sight ;
While here, as in a pile enchanted,
Concealed by orient groves transplanted,
We dwell in beauty and delight.

As twilight deepens, all seems holden
Spell-bound within some charmèd golden
Eve of Haroun Alraschid's reign,
For our own Court's felicitation
From Bagdad borrows celebration
Of love's glad year that knows not wane.

Festooned, entwined, and trellised, flowers
Glow here as in their eastern bowers ;
O'er palms, (a green secluded gloom,)
O'er purple-budded high bananas,
Hang roses Damascene Abaná's
Had envied in their rarest bloom.

From mimic lakes white lilies glimmer
Athwart the dusk of halls, where shimmer
And shine in haloed mystery,
The magic lamps of nights Arabian
(Sun, moon, and stars to which the Sabian
Might bow him down mistakenly).

Harps, viols, lutes with dulcet measure
Allure to interchange of pleasure

JUANA OF CASTILE

The noblesse of Bourgogne, France, Spain :
In orient splendour lords and ladies,
(Who should be praised by song of Saadi's)
Wend slowly forward twain and twain ;

And knightliest of the knights, (low bending
With courtliest grace,) my lord is lending
His hand to Marguerite of France :
Enthralled in eastern dream, I wonder
What spell holds his and mine asunder,
While *her* king leads me to the dance.

As waves of a Protean ocean
We ebb and flow in rhythmic motion
Unto the music's measured beat,
(That long with changeful charm entrances ;)
I tire—so often Philippe dances
With the same lady of my suite.

Dawn brings adieux, with lingering laughter
And sweet-voiced courtesies ; thereafter
My lord and I once more alone ;
But o'er my love some change mysterious
Has past, and left me cold, imperious,
And my heart's deep is frozen as stone.

JUANA OF CASTILE

In the world whereof Love is the Lord
Neither great is nor small ;
Both as one in the heart we record
There the wine and the gall
Intermingle ; the night and the day ;
Lightest gloom unto hell,
Dimmest gleam unto heav'n, lead the way ;
Faintest tokens foretell
Vastest issues ; least griefs greatest woes ;
Wellnigh viewless as air
The most trivial beginning foreshows
The full end unaware.

The slight grief—a mere spark in the eye,
Blown from fugitive wind !—
But to beauty afar and anigh
Its pang renders blind,
True an infinitesimal pain
Yet henceforward floats o'er
All we see a dark fleck, ne'er again
Are things fair as before.
The slight joy—a lark's pæan that thrills
The wide air with delight—
Let it lapse, ev'n the sun then half chills,
Waxes dim to our sight.

Men reply, “ In the planet of love
Framed by woman 'tis so,
But the planet we fashion thereof,
(The while theirs far below

JUANA OF CASTILE

Straightly circles sore-fretted,) behold
In wide cycle sweeps free ;
There small joys and small griefs, manifold,
Fused in great cease to be.

“ There the woman’s close vision is lost
In the man’s larger sight ;
There the sun by the shade is uncrossed ;
Separate rays give no light :
Subtile dusks never deepen the dark,
Supplementary stars in the height
Never shine with their faint further spark,
Day is day—night is night.”

Is the true world of love this of men
Where the part in the whole
Lapses lost ? by their far-reaching ken
From pole unto pole
All is seen, all is merged as in one ;
Sky, land, oceans, vales, streams,
Mountains, flowers, stars, and sun,
None failing it seems.

Is the woman’s the true world of love,
Where all parts in the whole
Are singly embraced, or above,
Or around, to each pole ?
Every change in the broad vault of sky,
Or of dark or of day ;
Every bird and its song, far and nigh ;
Every zephyr astray ;

JUANA OF CASTILE

Every cadence of winds, rivers, seas,
Every flower 'neath the sun ;
Every wasp, weed, thorn, canker ; all these
Singly, each in the one.

In the man's world his heart beats alone
With the heart of the whole ;
The full day the full night only known,
Entire bliss, entire dole.
In the woman's hers beats with the whole
Pulse and pulse through each part,
There dædal day night joy and dole,
Yet entire in her heart.

Ducal affairs of urgency
Have called my lord away from me ;
In the state bedchamber alone
I lie, my maidens all withdrawn ;
Long hours are yet before the dawn
Wherein my heart and I made known
Each to the other, may at last
Find bitter rest from silence past
In holding converse of our own.

How tired we are ! tired, wearied out
With love, love's jealousy of doubt,
And love's wild yearning soon and late.
This semblance of a woman, fair
As in old time those Lamiaë were

JUANA OF CASTILE

Who lured the Greeks to evil fate ;
Her gold hair clustering round her head
And trailing where her small feet tread,
What doth she here at Slumber's gate ?

Why looked on her so oft my lord ?
What strange pain, like a flaming sword
Smote thee, my heart, then ? let us keep
Our lonely vigil, ponder, fear,
Hope, love, hate, scorn together here :
Nay thus we wrong our king and weep
Through our own faithless vague surmise ;
A baleful fire blinded my eyes,
Let us forget and sleep—Heart—sleep.

Slumber no longer sought in vain
I enter by its gates again
The charmed dominions of love,
That were mine own, and are mine still
Saving when evil doubt works ill ;
How dark it is ! Scarce risen above
The white wet mist, yon pallid moon
(Like a wan flower in bloom too soon)
Gleams o'er the vacant courts thereof ;

Through the dim silence to my throne
I wend, and there sit long alone ;
Hell-born misdoubt possesses me,
Where is the king ? His heart's new queen
He reigns with in some realm unseen ;

JUANA OF CASTILE

'Tis false ! the coronal, that he
Himself on my hair set, lies here ;
Anew I crown me with no fear,
He doth but sleep, let ill dreams be.

Enthroned and crowned thus with my crown,
What echoed laughter laughs me down ?
Glad laughter as of love in Spring ?
Misdoubt requickens, sears like fire,
Yea my lord's heart hath its desire
With Her ; list ! their soft whispering,
Low murmurous, as southern winds
Whispers my kingdom from me, binds
My heart in steel against its king.

These lips are warm still with his kiss,
High heaven is fouled in hell's abyss ;
Nay, 'tis some subtle evil snare ;
Shame on thee, heart ! thy lord but sleeps,
What faithless woman in me weeps ?
In the red poppy fields, aware
Of none, he lies ; crowned with my crown
From this drear throne I wend me down,
'Neath the pale moon, to find him there.

JUANA OF CASTILE

*Unto myself to ease my heart of sorrow
An Eastern spell I sing,
And from Granada's buried treasure borrow
The Genii's lamp and ring.*

*O Love, Arabian Jinn, who art or formless
Or takest form at will ;
Resolve thyself for me into some stormless
Delight, and all things fill.*

*As from the vase that long close-sealed, had drifted
On Syrian waves to land,
The Genie rose (its magic lid uplifted)
In smoke o'er sea and strand ;*

*Thus king of Genii, god of powers Protean
From my heart issue free,
As æther of some blissful empyrean,
And spread o'er land and sea ;*

*Then bring unto the Paradisal pleasance
Its lord, my heart's desire ;
And thrill us through with thine aerial presence,
A rapture of joy and fire—*

JUANA OF CASTILE

“ To the lord of my love ;

Thus in greeting

My heart, a wide desolate sea
Into haven tumultuously beating
By this scroll in thine absence from me.
Can the harbour receive the full ocean ?
Upheaved on itself though it strain
At the bar in a billowy commotion,
Its influx seems yet the more vain.
Can the heart in a roll of papyrus
More simply find scope ? at full flow
Though it strain as the ocean desirous
For ingress, 'tis foiled even so.
Myriad thoughts, like white sea-birds that flutter
And cry o'er the turbulent main,
O'er the deep of my heart hovering, utter
Vague cries, and for thee seek in vain :
Look forth then, Belov'd, where (scarce broken
One billow, anear or afar)
Gathered in on itself and unspoken,
Love, ocean-like, seethes at the bar :
Juana.”

A courier from my lord doth cross my own ;
See, Heart, we are not now so quite alone.

“ From thy presence I write to thy presence,
For still thou art ever with me ;
In city, or forest, or pleasance
I live in a vision of thee ;

JUANA OF CASTILE

Thine the day, whose fair glories seem after
Some fashion thine own to beguile ;
The zephyrs have stolen thy laughter
The sunbeams have borrowed thy smile :
If a dove on my balcony perches
It coos with thy voice ; lissome grace
Thou hast lent the young willows and birches,
Spring herself in the vales hath thy face.
Thine the night, where thy witchery still holds me
Sleeping, waking, moon-goddess supreme ;
In the dusk of thy hair darkness folds me
Thou leanest to kiss me through dream :
By thee all rejoices around me,
Not theirs the strange splendour of flower
Or of sun, thy dear presence hath found me
Though lost in blind paths from thy bower :
Philippe."

Silence, I pray for silence ; if I sleep
And do but dream in slumber, strange and deep
As that which lulls in lotus-blossomed lands,
Still rouse me not ; O whispering voices keep
Silence profound as on Lethean strands,
Nor wake me to the life of those who weep,
Let me thus ever sleep.

Though I but dream, (the dupe of false delight,)
Make drunken with nepenthe at some rite
Of gods grown pitiful of human woe,

JUANA OF CASTILE

Still let me dream, such dreams for pain requite ;
Though all be thus delusion, even so
I would dream on, as dreams of noon the night,
As blind men dream of sight.

Like one, half roused from sleep by dawn's pale gleam,
Who wits not what is real and what doth seem,
I (haply still in thrall of slumber bound)
For voices of the living world misdeem
The haunting voices heard in Sleep's Profound,
(O'er whose dim realm Illusion reigns supreme ;)
And waking still I dream.

'Twixt dawn and dark, 'twixt dream and doubt astray,
Scarce conscious in an agony I pray
For silence ; pitying gods I dare not wake
I dare not know if in the night or day
These voices speak ; ere my young heart they break
Ere faith, hope, joy, ere life itself they slay,
Disprove the thing they say.

BOOK III

JUANA OF CASTILE

PHILIPPE and Juana again in Flanders. Renewed trouble. Her Castilian jealousy more fully aroused, together with instinctive revenge. The birth of her son (afterwards Charles V. of Austria). Agonised struggle to retain her faith in Philippe. Subsequent proof of his disloyalty. He seeks a reconciliation.

JUANA OF CASTILE

Again beneath the same blue skies
In Gand the home of my desire
We dwell, but o'er its Paradise
The Cherubim with sword of fire
Keep watch and force me to retire.

Here by the rivers that still flow
From the lost Eden as at first
(Their waters pure and cold as snow)
I wander, seeking now accurst
In vain to quench my burning thirst.

'Tis chill, the plain is blanched with snow ;
My maidens leave the tapestry
They broider from that weft I know
So well ; the weft that lived for me
One firelight eve of fantasy.

In merry groups they gather round
The brazier-fires in court and hall ;
Their hearts no straitening frost hath bound,
Hate holds no soul of theirs in thrall,
The sun of love illumines them all.

But I stay with my broidery still,
And than the snow yet colder feels
My heart ; and blind black doubt (more chill
Than the keen wintry frost that seals
The springs of Earth) my life congeals.

JUANA OF CASTILE

At length I leave the glimmering woof,
And down the long bright hall I go,
Nor from my ladies' glee aloof
Thus hold me, for full oft I know
A woman's heart creates its woe.

España's maidens, my most dear,
Hush their soft laughter silently
As unto them I draw anear ;
They fall back with sweet courtesy
And their eyes seem to pity me ;

“ Pity ? ”—I am not well they see—
Their hearts are tender overmuch—
No pity else indeed could be ;
Castile endures not any such
Ev'n her apparel's hem to touch.

So now I stand, with smile and song,
Merry as they, until (most fair
Amidst my fair Basque ladies' throng)
I see the sorceress, whose gold hair
Has woven for my lord a snare.

Then life in me runs fire through night ;
For the gemmed bodkin that I wear
I feel to smite her from my sight,
But suddenly wax faint, and ere
'Tis found, swoon backward unaware.

JUANA OF CASTILE

One kiss and yet another,
What baby-joy is this ?
The one sole bud remaining
Of love's sweet spring-time, waning ;
In all green fields to Mother
None were so fair I wis ;
One kiss and yet another,
From that allured to this.

Who to thy birth were bidden ?
What fairy gave to thee
The whole white world (a glistening
Iced cake, pet, for thy christening) ?
What marvels there are hidden !
What magic plums must be !
Who to thy birth were bidden ?
Who brought the cake for thee ?

But Baby is not heeding,
For no such gift he cares ;
He hears young cherubs' voices
And in a realm rejoices
Through which their song is leading,
A realm both his and theirs ;
No lower kingdom heeding,
For no less glory cares.

So be it with thee ever
Regard no transient throne ;
Thus thou wilt purge more purely
World-evil, soothe more surely

JUANA OF CASTILE

World-sorrow, in that never
These unto thee are known ;
So be it with thee ever
Heed no terrestrial throne.

Ev'n now thy lips are drawing
The poison from my heart ;
Cool, soft small white dove nestling
There where ill passions wrestling
As at the overawing
Of Love, desist, depart ;
Ev'n now thy kiss is drawing
The poison from my heart.

Through the long lonely nights within my mind
Doubt, waking, mocks me : “ Why dost thou thus bind
Thine eyes from sight, believe but as they find.”
Nay I will not believe, I will not see,
Free-will is ours, I will then to be blind,
And yet to me a god my lord shall be
Unfallen from inviolate deity.

JUANA OF CASTILE

*Ah ! Love, 'neath thy pomegranate groves 'tis well,
Life joys in us, ere, all too soon, alas !
We find that they who taste the fruit must pass,
Like Proserpine, one half their years in hell.*

JUANA OF CASTILE

O'er golden palm-girt strands I strayed,
My heart was glad in me ;
Around the nested halcyons played
The sunlit summer sea ;

No voice of baleful prophecy
To ban my joy was heard ;
No wing of evil augury
Amid the halcyons stirred ;

Soft hushed the whilom tempest's roar,
The wavelets laughed for glee ;
When swiftly o'er the glittering shore
A snake slid suddenly :

Hugged close within its wreathen death
I strained in desperate strife,
With bursting heart and sobbing breath,
Tense every power of life.

How long I strove I know not, time
Was as eternity ;
It hissed within my ears, its slime
Dripped venom'd, blinding me.

On its fell throat my hands I clenched,
And strove at mortal strain,
With wildered arms that would have wrenched
Its coils apart—in vain—

JUANA OF CASTILE

The powers of life, o'erborne at last
Strangling relaxed in me ;
And then I laughed ; all effort past,
In the death-agony.

“ Let us be glad together
(You say), make merry at whiles,
Grown tired of stormy weather
Through tears, see, April smiles ;
Listen, 'mid song and laughter,
She frolics with the wind,
For joy that May comes after
And March remains behind.
Let us be glad together
The rains and storms forget,
Replume the drooping feather,—
With us 'tis April yet.”

Yes, thus again together
Let us be glad awhile ;
Forgetting stormy weather
On Love's Pelorian isle ;
No hazard of his treason,
No bonds of woman's pride,
No “ moly ” of wrath or reason
Can stay her from his side :
Steeled vainly 'gainst his singing,
Lashed idly to the mast,

*

JUANA OF CASTILE

The while his song is ringing
She yields ere she sail past.

My lord, the time is dead, when as a child,
By specious word and soft caress beguiled,
I laughed at doubt ; deluded easily
Was happy again ; for love was then in me
So young it knew not what full life would be.
But now, behold, it is to stature grown,
The depths and heights of its own being known ;
See, with the tiger-whelp a man may play,
Toy, trifle at his will, but on that day
When it is nurtured to the tigress, when
Of its full powers possessed, there can be then
No further trifling ; toy with it, or chafe,
The desert passions wake—it is not safe—
Quick tears and strange, unbidden, blind my eyes ;
Dearest, I know that ofttimes in the guise
Of a white angel winged with Heaven's own light
Misdoubt is found a devil of the night ;
See, I esteem it such and scorn it thus,
Let us forget—let love be new to us.

Unseen I saw ; the sun was low,
Down the dim paths they strayed
The Mary-lilies there arow

JUANA OF CASTILE

Trembled as if afraid.
So close they walked, so low he bent
O'er her his kingly head
Their golden locks together blent ;
At some soft word she said
The deepened dark of his blue eyes
Flashed lightnings into hers,
Uplifted in alluring wise ;
Some strange sweet love was theirs.

The tender curve his lips took, well—
Too well I knew—(curved lips
Like those of some enchanted shell
Wherefrom a siren sips :)
As through the fields they sauntered down
The violets sought to hide ;
Touched by her trailing saffron gown
The kingcups shrank aside,
Beneath the heavens' lurid glow
The birds their carols hushed,
A butterfly, alighting low,
By her small foot was crushed.

As toward her bower they went, o'erhead
The sky grew crimson flame ;
The white brier-roses all blushed red
And shut their leaves for shame.
The day sank dark below the west,
She poured her sorcerous wine ;
His golden head lay on her breast,
Mine eyes beheld it—mine—

*

JUANA OF CASTILE

And as I looked the love that rose
A lava-flood in me,
Through all its fiery surges froze
Into a glacial sea.

“ With lightsome jest, my lord, you ask
What is it aileth me
That thus I wear the tragic mask
Of Muse Melpomene ?

“ Or am I petrified in dream
That here with you alone
Still unapproachable I seem
As Niobe in stone ? ”

Nay, touch me not ; unloose thy hands from mine,
Love hath gone forth from my soul and from thine ;
North and south poles are not so far apart
As we are, heart from heart.

Let us not desecrate that dead to us
With a false semblance of its passion thus ;
Mock suns, auroral lights ne'er thrilled the cold
Of polar snows ; behold

I shudder in thy embrace as in th' embrace
Of Love's dead body in a soulless place ;
Back to the past there is no way, desist !
Our kisses are all kissed !

JUANA OF CASTILE

*When the heart's heaven is rolled away,
Its god no god, its idol clay ;
When all ideal dreams are o'er
There yet remaineth us one way :
Forget that Heaven was, that e'er
Love, Beauty, Truth, white-pinioned were ;
That man was ever as God forget,
Or Earth as Eden, or light seen there
As seven suns that never set.*

.

*See, thus the past is past away,
The dark is now a dawn of day,
The Heavens are lapsed, lo! the new Earth,
Where love is wingless, gods are clay,
Arise, enter its House of Mirth !*

JUANA OF CASTILE

With breaking heart I come to thee,
Lord God of Love, have pity on me ;
At other shrines I bowed the knee

And unto gods of darkness sought,
For stronger these than thou, methought,
Who in my aid hadst nothing wrought ;

They held my soul for long in thrall
Of night and hell, but now I fall
At thy feet, know thee Lord of all ;

Could my heart's anguish outward sweep
In molten flood as some pent Deep
Of lava, could it speak or weep,

Some ease might be ; in silence bound
No way of issue ever found
It seethes like fire underground.

With shuddering shock my pulses beat,
Hell in my soul and Heaven meet
In mortal conflict, and thy feet

(The deadly struggle direr yet)
As with great tears of blood are wet ;
The passion of love's anguished sweat ;

O turn my lord's heart unto me,
Or do thou take my life to thee ;
Unbind his bond and set him free :

JUANA OF CASTILE

With me he hath no happiness,
My love contents him less and less
And sees no way whereby to bless ;
Give joy but unto his heart, mine
For this full willingly to Thine
Through shame and anguish I consign.

“ Take up for thy lament the lyre,”
Word came unto the seer of old,
“ Bewail the fallen king of Tyre,
The covering cherub he, behold,
Glorious with precious stones and gold.”

As in the vision the Tyrian king
In love's young dream my lord to me,
Who have no lyre his dirge to sing ;
Perfect in all his ways as he
Glorious in beauty, verily.

How is he fall'n ! the fall is his
Down in the darkness come to dwell ;
What matter that mine the anguish is ?
What matter that for me there fell
Love, Truth, and Heav'n, with him to hell ?

If he could but arise once more,
If these dim, yearning eyes could see
His brightness perfect as before,
Joy yet were mine, even should I be
Left desolate eternally.

JUANA OF CASTILE

I sit on the ground with mine idol, nor seek to arise,
For all deities else, and their glories, are naught in mine eyes
With its desecrate beauty compared, yea debased though
it be.

And, no longer a god, it is all things for ever to me.

Wilt thou reject, Heart, or rejoice ?
Philippe our presence seeks ;
Listen, the same alluring voice
With the same passion speaks ;

“ A fool who in the Paphian wine of pleasure
Dissolved his pearl of love
Unkinged and dispossessed of life's whole treasure
He pleads with thee thereof.

“ O lips, that kissed, still lure to kiss for ever ;
Sweet eyes, the light and fire
Of empyreal heaven ; so gained man never,
So lost his heart's desire.

“ White clinging arms, whose forfeited embraces
Through every vein I crave ;
Meridian June's, withdrawn from me, thy face is,
And midnight tempests rave.

“ From thy dear pity's door none e'er departed
Unsuccoured, comfortless ;
To me alone wilt thou prove stony-hearted
And deaf to my distress ?

JUANA OF CASTILE

“ O bounteous one, in all thy wide almsgiving
Hast thou for love no dole ?
No apple of life, no drop from all the living
Sweet waters of thy soul ?

“ Blind, famished, mad with thirst, see it abases
Itself before thy feet.
O lift it to the light wherein thy face is,
Give it to drink and eat.”

Because these lips of mine no word can frame
Of that which parted us ere thus you came ;
Is it so hard, Philippe, to understand
No shadowy hand now slips between thy hand
And mine, to sunder them ? no shadowy kiss,
Between our cleaving lips, makes hell of this ?
What should be said ?
Can words mere nothingness define, or name the
 dead ?

JUANA OF CASTILE

*Although the Sun, from her awhile withdrawn
Hath left the Earth alone in night,
When his returning splendour fires the dawn
Doth she, contemptuous, repel his light?
Nay, one embodied joy she then appears,
Her raptured smile irradiate through her tears.*

BOOK IV

JUANA OF CASTILE

ENVOYS arrive from Isabella of Spain, declaring Juana and Philippe heirs apparent to the throne, and requesting their presence in the country. Their welcome at Toledo. Ensuing happiness, and festivities in public acknowledgment of them. Juana's renewed agony occasioned by Philippe's continued attention to the same lady of her suite, although at times he still shows a semblance of the old devotion to herself. His unfeeling departure for Burgundy, shortly before the birth of her second son. Her consequent misery, culminating in a wild attempt to follow him alone one winter night. Birth of her child. She afterwards rejoins Philippe in Burgundy, where once more for a few months there is renewal of happiness. The death of her mother (Isabella of Spain) and their succession to its throne.

JUANA OF CASTILE

España's envoys in my Mother's name
Our audience seek, and loyally proclaim
The hest that heirs apparent of the Crown
—Its wide new conquests and its old renown—
Appoints us, and our presence thus requires
For the prospective honours she desires :
Phantasmal unto me, crowns, kingdoms, thrones,
Love is my all, and all things else disowns ;
But joy is mine in that my lord is fain
Of our Castile, and its broad realms of Spain.

In dark Toledo's towers
Amidst the snow and wind,
Our love hath made us bowers
Of amaranth entwined.
The turbid Tagus, flowing
O'er tawny rock-bound sands,
To us is Pison glowing
On Havilah's gold strands.

As here awhile we tarry,
Together we look down
On plains that blizzards harry,
Or searing suns burn brown ;
But groves (or white or golden)
In the grey wintry gloom
(By all else un beholden)
For us bear fruit, and bloom.

JUANA OF CASTILE

Fanfare of trumpets, breaking,
Through love's new dream ; as king
And queen apparent, waking,
We hear the joy-bells ring,
And watch our knights assemble
In courts where cushats coo,
And roses glow and tremble
While southern zephyrs woo.
Mid shouts the glad air rending,
As in some festal play
Down purple stairs descending
We take our royal way.

The pageant now advances ;
With it we pass between
Hedges of glittering lances
And bucklers ; King and Queen
In merry mummer-drama
At carnival we seem,
Saying that " Woe Alhama "
Wails through the glint and gleam,
As down gay streets and under
Rare Moorish spoils aglow,
'Mid martial strains and thunder
Of glad acclaim we go ;
Through coral alcoves, bowers
Of palm (where twined we see
Strange Hispaniolan flowers
From seeds of faerie).
Still onward, while before us
Santiago's towers loom ;
España's flag waves o'er us ;

JUANA OF CASTILE

Her royal cannon boom ;
By papal pomp preceded
We enter, yet all seems
A pageant scarcely heeded
A carnival in dreams,
Until athwart the dreaming
Castile's own voices break ;
Then king and queen of seeming
True king and queen awake.

Unto Granada we repair ;
Beneath the Archway of the Sun,
(Resplendent in the radiant air,)
Down the low gorges, bare and dun
The brilliant cavalcade moves on ;
In gleaming file and festal train
Grandeas, Dukes, Caballeros ride ;
A King to grace the kingdom's pride
(Paris, in golden mail and casque) ;
Philippe restrains his restive steed :
Once more all seems a dreamer's masque
As with my Mother I precede
Our retinues, and nothing heed ;
Yet all too well at heart I know,
In passing through the dreary plain,
Who lures my lord to ride apart
Among the ladies of my train,
And night and madness fill my brain.

JUANA OF CASTILE

I wait, he comes not, lured from me ;
Through the long hours I lie alone ;
I, O Corinthian wives, as ye,
And curse with passion like your own
The Libyan Lamia's sorcery.

At nightfall in the pleasant ways
She sets her beauty for a snare,
A glint and gleam more fine than day's
Chequers the toils of her gold hair,
And men are taken unaware.

With charmèd voice she cries " O list ! "
Witching their heart with serpent wiles ;
By her sweet sorcerous lips once kist
No mortal may her spell resist ;
Thus to her bower she beguiles !

Olympian banquet there regales ;
Song, dulcet as Pelorian strains,
And wine enchanted fire their veins ;
Her beauteous bosom she unveils
And wins them ere the darkness wanes.

We women of the common Earth
Have but its common gifts to give,
Its love (by which alone we live) ;
Its corn and wine for feast ; for mirth
Its song—these have no charmèd worth ;

JUANA OF CASTILE

What marvel that not vain her spell ?
In their place our feet, homeward set,
Had haply followed her to hell :
Could ye at all forgive, forget
O wives of Corinth ?—I know not yet.

JUANA OF CASTILE

*Through the power of the Genie of Love, by the glimmer
Of the moon's waning crescent, past fountains that shimmer,
And rillets that gleam, amid balsams and thyme,
In Arabian Granada's Alhambrian prime,
Moslem Princess, I steal through the thicket of roses,
To the small fragrant garden the myrtle encloses,
Wherein, when Orion stands guard with his sword,
I shall tryst with the Christian knight my own lord ;
Eternity's bliss scarce will vie with that hour's,
In the Queen Lindaraxa's red pomegranate bowers.*

*Through a maze of delight all the fireflies are winging,
And the bulbuls have lured a new transport for singing ;
The perfume of haze-hidden flowers fills the air ;
And the dim charmed dusk is athrob, as aware
He will come through the little vermilion wicket,
(Concealed by the roses that climb from the thicket ;)
In the minaret's silence succeeding the call
Of the night's last muezzin, when darkness hides all ;
And then every joy will wax faint before ours
In the Queen Lindaraxa's red pomegranate bowers.*

*Hark, his step !—in my heart of the Princess no place is
For dread lest he tire of my Moslem embraces ;
Ev'n in " Jannat al Mawa " I know unto him
The eyes of the Houris to mine will seem dim :
All the transport of love in its sweet, stolen meetings,
All the sweetness of love in its passionate greetings,
All the kisses that love through all ages hath kissed,
By some strange subtle nuance of rapture have missed
The consummate incomparable joy that is ours
In the Queen Lindaraxa's red pomegranate bowers.*

JUANA OF CASTILE

*To his words all the words by all lovers' lips spoken
Are wordless ; their voices (impassioned or broken)
Are voiceless to his, which is quiet and deep
As a midsummer's ocean's that chanteth to keep
The wild tempest that beats in its breast still thereunder ;
O'er La Vela's white terrace the stars peep and wonder
How in such a delightful diminutive space
Where the tryst of two fairies could hardly find place,
There can be such a great human love as is ours
In the Queen Lindaraxa's red pomegranate bowers.*

JUANA OF CASTILE

A blaze of light, a dulcet sound,
The Courts dance ; I am but aware
Of one who doth my heart confound
In shimmering samite ; debonair,
Pearls in the glory of her hair ;

Gold hair that crowns her more than queen,
And backward floats a dazzling snare,
In meshes of enchanted sheen
By sorcery woven ; wheresoe'er
I move it moves before me there ;

A mocking flame that lures my lord
To follow ; with our knights I stand
(O'er my heart's passion keeping ward),
While he and she, hand locked in hand
Dance seguidil and saraband.

A vengeful vehement fire of hell
And outer darkness, life in me,
And love demoniac, hard to quell,
As maddened, outraged, dazed, I see
Prevail that glittering sorcery.

Earthquake and fire, my Heart, are o'er ;
Storm past, and for the tempest's roar
The still small voice of love once more.

JUANA OF CASTILE

Passions convulse not ; hushed all moan ;
A closer self than that our own,
Philippe's, our lord's, we know alone.

If for our love's sake we could die
And so his love have help thereby
We should not shrink, thou, Heart, and I.

Death were the utmost agony,
No more at all his face to see,
Never again with him to be.

Yet in the lone waste lands below,
Where never flowers at springtime blow,
For his sake joy were ours of woe.

Ev'n thus no help to him could be,
Royal must wed with royalty,
And still apart were he and she.

Is there no way that we may find
To do him service ? Seeking blind,
Through a dread maze we wind and wind :

What can we ? clue is none to guide ;
Meseems, though scorned, still at his side
Love serveth best : thus we abide.

JUANA OF CASTILE

*See, Carlos, the real enchanted
Red Castle where once when a child
I lived ; its gay garden was planted
By winds from Arabia beguiled :
And the Castle itself by two genii
Was built (Sun and Frost) long ago ;
Of all " Castles in Spain " ever seen, I
Not any so wonderful know.*

*How often I wished I could draw it,
(Though no drawing quite like it could be ;)
But now just as I myself saw it
My own little Carlos can see.
While we look at its marvels together
The tale that the fairies one day
Told to me you shall hear, and then whether
You think it is true you can say.*

*They said the Sun-Genie awaking,
Ere the Vega below was astir,
This green height (then haze-hidden ;) mistaking
For an islet of dawn in mid-air,
On it raised a fair Castle (vermilion
And white ;) with the clouds of the morn ;
All finished, court, tower and pavilion,
He wished it inside to adorn.*

*While he sought some device, nor yet found it ;
The mist rolled away ; the green height
With his " Château en Espagne " that crowned it
Shone forth on his wondering sight ;*

JUANA OF CASTILE

*Myriad gossamers far and near shimmered,
Myriad dewdrops like gems glittered nigh ;
Frail opaline films glistened, glimmered ;
Golden rack floated low in the sky.*

*Here then was the clue he had wanted ;
Faery fretwork he fashioned at ease
Gemmed filigree trellis enchanted,
And, inside, he adorned it with these.
With gold rack crowned the pillars, and portals ;
Tinted arabesques everywhere wrought ;
And many fair wonders, that mortals
To fashion could never be taught.*

*A marvel of beauty, completed
The cloud-castle stood ; but ere night
His magical labour defeated,
He knew it must vanish from sight ;
So he called the Frost-genie from under
Guadarrama to come with his Art,
And freeze it to stone, that its wonder
And beauty might never depart.*

*All within the Frost managed to harden
And frescoed the walls with rare skill ;
Then he went, and the Sun made this garden
Outside near the streams on the hill ;
Hesperian nymphs he persuaded
To give him some grafts from their bowers ;
And by orient winds he was aided
With seeds of strange Syrian flowers.*

JUANA OF CASTILE

*Then the winds chased the streamlets, that hither
And thither ran, laughing, around ;
Or fell in cascades, or hid whither
None sought for them, down underground ;
Through the fountains one after another
Welling up in each court,—as to-day—
And now you have seen all, dear, like Mother,
Was the fairies' tale true, should you say ?*

JUANA OF CASTILE

“ Affairs of State call you to Bourgogne ”—nay,
Stay yet a little longer, Dearest, stay,
If but until our Noël feast is past,
For lacking you my heart holds twofold fast
At festival ; see, I have suffered much,
Coldness, neglect, humiliation such
As lineage of mine had never borne,
And quick in me, Castile oft laughs to scorn
The weakness of my love that loves through all,
Nor by its own keen steel self-slain doth fall ;
Howbeit of weakest things most weak, among
All strongest things not one as love is strong,
Thus dominant o’er wrath and shame, again
It yet entreats “ a little while remain.”
With you through life, death, hell, I fain would go,
But even to Bourgogne cannot, this you know ;
Therefore stay with me, Philippe,—Husband,—stay,—
Yet you refuse, “ A woman’s love, you say,
By importunity outwearies man ;
Time, tide will wait no dalliance, nor can ;
What are a few short weeks or more, or less,
When State affairs of so strong import press ? ”

O God ! what can I ? sundering seas and wide
Stretch now between us standing side by side.

JUANA OF CASTILE

Unto the dust by sorrow
Bowed down ; and dumb with woe ;
Pent close in night whose morrow
Ne'er dawneth ; even so,
While in the green quadrangle
Our court-musicians play,
The close strait hands that strangle
My life are thrust away.

As charmèd music welling
From out enchanted ground,
(Substance and sense dispelling
By sorcery of sound ;)
The strains rise, and the presence
Of individual woe
Becomes a subtile essence,
That scarce as mine I know.

Thus life hath, some brief hours,
Illusive ease in me :
Ye gods of ruth, ye Powers
Of pity (if such be),
Guard sorrow's trance unshaken
By memory's trump supreme ;
O let it ne'er awaken
To find its dream a dream.

JUANA OF CASTILE

Midnight, the skies with pulsing fires are rife,
Here the keen wind like an assassin's knife
Stabs through me, while alone athwart the snows
I hasten forth ; my ladies sleep ; none knows,
I follow Philippe—in me, as above,
Is darkness, quick with pulsing fires of love.
The outer dark no more extends apart,
It merges in the night of my own heart,
And drawn within its paramount fire, each fire
Of heaven becomes a pulse of its desire ;
Before this wild potential passion all
The barriers of created things must fall,
And sundering space remove, thus rendered free,
There where I would, as lightning, I shall be :
Nay, ev'n these locked gates give not place to love
But bar me in th' Alcazar's entrance grove ;
O hopeless hope, that lured me forth too late !
Were I to rouse the porters of the gate
They dare not let me now pass out alone ;
And woman-like I fall to feeble moan
And futile sobs, here still in durance bound.
On the keen wind is blown a hurried sound,
My ladies have awaked, for me they seek ;
They draw anear, they throng around me, speak ;
—Strange words as in the tongue of some far land,
Once known, forgotten, hard to understand ;—
The former things are past away ; I know
No longer anything but loss ; yet so
With tears they strive a lava-fire to stem,
They weep, implore me to return with them ;
Tell me I shudder in the frozen cold,
And do but wander in dream ;—a vain tale told ;

JUANA OF CASTILE

Sleep hath forsaken me long ; I feel no frost,
Love burns within me, flame in darkness lost ;
Nay, I return not, howsoe'er implored ;
I go to Philippe, to my life, my lord.

Like a tempestuous ocean
Soft lulled at length to rest ;
Becalmed, to tranquil motion,
Love heaves within my breast ;
And drowsily unclosing
Mine eyes bend dreamily
O'er the small life reposing
A halcyon on the sea.

My sweet, the bands prepared thee
Were doubt and dark distress ;
What god of pity spared thee,
Swathed thee in happiness ?
A gift of Father's, never
To be withdrawn, thou art ;
Mine own, none else's ever,
Small heart of his own heart.

JUANA OF CASTILE

In Bourgogne ; through dread night and fire
I reach at length my heart's desire ;
After long thirst, here at your lips I drink ;
And in the breaking day
Back to their caves all births of darkness shrink,
Or, bat-winged, flee away.

Tell of yourself ; each trivial thing :
In every blossom blooms the spring ;
And in the strayling shell the very song
Of the full Deep swells clear ;
Double my joy ; thus doubly after long
I shall see you and hear.

In this our Eden once more, your head leant thus
Back on my breast, we laugh for joy ; how fair
The world is ; God's new Paradise it seems
Where former troubles are forgotten dreams ;
In the sweet sunlight flitting through the air
See, tiny gleeful lives, like flowers on wing ;
The groves are loud with song, and in the heart of us
All the birds sing.

“ Sit here (you say) in this green wild of roses ;
Deep beneath crimson deep,
Each glows, until the perfect damask closes
Over the heart asleep.

JUANA OF CASTILE

“ Reign o’er these Syrian beauties their Sultana ;
Shiraz and Babylon,
Or gardens of Tunisian Ariana
Ne’er boasted such an one.

“ My rose of love, whose richer crimson foldeth
In deeper depths aglow
O’er the vermilion heart, that shut withholdeth
Its perfect passion so.

“ As when in charmed Arabian gardens planted
Flowers bloomed by sorcery,
A Princess you, within a rose enchanted,
I Prince within a bee ;

“ Now, at the bee’s kiss (mine) your heart uncloses
And to its utmost deep
I dive, my rose of love, my love of roses,
Enfold me there and keep.”

Most reverend Sirs, your fervid eloquence
I hear with all esteem and deference,
As the revered of Her, whose dying hest
Bade you thus bear to me her heart’s bequest—
(The fervent prayer that her Church yet might bless
My soul with peace),—but this you ask of me
Regretful I refuse, it may not be.
Last eve at dark your embassy of death
Entered our palace, and with dolorous breath

JUANA OF CASTILE

Its mournful tidings unto us divulged,
Leaving a daughter's grief to be indulged :
This morn in my dead Mother's sainted name
Ye seek me ; by her zeal would kindle flame
On my soul's altar ; now adjuring me
To hear High Mass within mine oratory
For her soul's glory ; pardon me, nor shrine
Nor pyx of that dread God she deemed divine
Is hallowed there, no priest could celebrate
Within its adytum, though alienate
From truth I must appear thus in your sight,
I cannot do my own heart this despite ;
That shrine is sacred to one Lord alone,
The Lord of Love, nor may of Him be known
Whose fires I saw with tear-brimmed childish eyes,
Consume beneath the blue Castilian skies
Those human sacrifices offered there
Unto his praise and honour ; pray you bear
With my refusal ; your request forego ;
I am a woman, Love is all I know.

BOOK V

JUANA OF CASTILE

THE voyage of Philippe and Juana with their retinues toward Spain. They are wrecked on the Cornish coast. Royally welcomed by Henry and his Court, Juana is by both much admired and beloved. Philippe's disloyalties and her consequent suffering.

JUANA OF CASTILE

Storm and tumult ; the roaring of surf upon cliffs, white
and sheer,
Like a reed the ship wavers ; our mariners' hearts fail for
fear ;
Up to heav'n we are borne, and thence hurled as it were
unto hell ;
The swift flames of the lightnings o'erhead, as when Lucifer
fell,
Seem swords of the cohorts of God ; and the thunder
resounds,
As his voice in denouncing ; a horror of darkness confounds,
While the Deep yawns to meet us descending ; again ere
we wis
We are borne up to heav'n from the depths of the soundless
abyss ;
Downward driven once more, hither, thither we drift ; and
the night
Beats upon us with tempest, defying our strongest men's
might.
But at one with the flame-riven sky, with the waves and
the wind,
The quick life in me lives, one in passion, invincible, blind,
Boundless, fathomless, travailing in darkness and storm
none may quell ;
In its strenuous pangs laying hold upon heaven and hell.
Here at length is deliverance for love, where its tempests at
will
Sweep forth, unconfined by the mortal, (that oft in me still
Is too weak, and too strait to sustain them ;) lo, under their
sway
The tumultuous elements merge in my life ; they are I ; I
am they :

JUANA OF CASTILE

As the star-fires strained forth with the fires of my soul, one
with me,
Through that night when I followed my lord, in the same
wise the sea
The wild wind, and the thunder-rent sky, with the storm in
me meet ;
One vehement tumult—yea so, with my very heart beat ;
One mighty and dominant passion ; all depths, every
height,
Convulsed in one tempest that strains, toward my lord,
through the night.

'Mid the uproar there rings o'er the deck a loud shout from
the helm,
“ Breakers, breakers ahead ” ; and great billows wellnigh
overwhelm
The ship plunging in torrents of foam, shoreward driven by
the blast ;
Philippe comes to me ; round us there gather pale faces
aghast ;
Many cry unto Heaven for deliverance ; “ From what ? ”
asks my heart ;
Save that he still is fain of the sun, it were silent ; apart
From the transient it beats ; in it panic and fear have no
place ;
Storm is calm, death is life unto love in its lord's fast em-
brace.
'Mid the white, reeling mountains of surf, the ship pitches,
they dash,
(As hurled by the Cyclops upon her ;) the mast and keel
crash ;
Disabled she founders, then, lo, in the hurricane's roar

80

JUANA OF CASTILE

Like a bubble of foam she is broken and cast upon shore :
On the isles of the north we are wrecked ; the pale dawn
on the strand

Peers forth shivering, the while to our rescue rush many a
band

Of the brave Cornish seamen, and thus not a life of us lost,
We are borne into haven, and harboured our crew tempest-
tossed.

From Henry of England all greeting ;
Masques, tourneys, balls ; pastime with hound,
Or with falcon ; new festival meeting
New delay, by the wind still here bound.
Kingly courteous, with knightly endeavour
To please or divert, as we ride
Through his wide Windsor Forest, he ever
With smile and glad word seeks my side ;
Shows some point of the falcon, or raises
Some doubt of the bugle's true tone,
Or with chivalrous protest dispraises
His Country and Court for our own.

While adown his fair Thamis at leisure
We glide through the green budding spring
In purple-sailed state ; for my pleasure
His minstrels are bidden to sing.
At tilt with my favour, or lending
His hand for the dance, of a high
Kingly chivalry, kindness unending,
And queenly recognisant I.

JUANA OF CASTILE

But through all there exists not another
Save my own king, my own knight for me ;
Him alone I perceive and what other
May queen of his chivalries be.

At eve when the Courts meet, resplendent
In broidered and jewelled array,
Cloth of gold, eastern tissues ; ascendent
(Like a sun amid stars gone astray)
Among all beauteous faces his face is ;
And 'mid all knightly graces, to sight
As a god's amid mortals his grace is ;
Cynosure of all eyes, and delight.
Day buds, and night closes, but through him
For mine ; my whole world it is he ;
While of him, and by him, and to him
Alone the life liveth in me.

In Andalusian Courts, (of me
Oblivious,) on his way
From other bowers, my lord sang free
A catch of some light lay.

“ Another nest, another year !
Love hath a swallow's wing ;
The summer flowers are fading here
It seeks a budding spring.”

JUANA OF CASTILE

And now beneath these vernal skies,
In yonder maple grove
He lilts, grown tired of northern eyes,
A further strain thereof.

“ Another nest another year ;
Too pale this island sun ;
The joys of spring are palling here
Elsewhere they must be won.”

O heart of mine that hearest now,
That heardest then, alone,
Sick, shuddering, loathing ; would that thou
Wert frozen into stone.

JUANA OF CASTILE

*Blow east, blow west, blow far and near,
Blow south and north ;
Blow inland for awhile, then veer
And once again blow forth :
Blow here and there, blow to and fro.
Blow warm and cold, blow high and low :
Then, wearied, cease to blow.
Or winged, or wingless, who shall bind
Or say thee " Yea " or " Nay," O wind ?*

*Blow east and west ; blow south and north ;
Man's love is wind ;
Fold wing in hawthorn groves ; fleet forth
And myrtle bowers find :
Love far and near, love here and there ;
Or even to love at all forbear ;
O woman's heart what care ?
So light, so slight, so fugitive
Scorn were too heavy a meed to give.*

JUANA OF CASTILE

Too late my lord ; what would you with me now ?
Our Alpha and our Omega are said,
And on our lips their fervent speech is dead ;
Yea, though in Love's high name we still should vow,
The words were vacant being dumb at heart ;
Therefore I pray depart.

Three dim, pale moons from these chill British skies
Peered down upon me, as so oft alone,
Forsaken of you on some slight pretext shown,
I lay through weary nights, with sleepless eyes
That saw yours kindling all the darkling hours
With light in other bowers.

Wild passions tore my breast, ere in disdain
(Stabbed to the heart through woman's rightful pride)
I rose imperial to cast aside
The marriage robe, abhorring any stain,
And scorning to be scorned ; while love's own fire
Driven back, became its pyre.

O would that we had drunk the seething wine,
The cup of Ocean's mighty sorcery,
The only loving-cup left you and me ;
Then had my heart been yours and your heart mine ;
Whelmed in deep waters, joy had been by us
Refound—sought vainly thus.

JUANA OF CASTILE

*In love's new kingdom here alone,
As changed into a queen of stone,
I sit in the chill dark, behold,
From my set lips there breaks nor sigh
Nor moan, and no wild yearning cry
Stirs the dread silence : mute and cold
Seated enthroned with upright head
Like Barbarossa buried dead,
I reign while dynasties wax old.*

*All dominations of the day
Must with the sunset pass away ;
Monarchs of life must abdicate,
But here, through an eternal night,
Quitting my transient throne of light,
Perpetually I sit in state ;
A Queen of Death, like Proserpine,
I hold this kingdom which is mine,
Against all powers of life and fate.*

JUANA OF CASTILE

Lullaby, lullaby,
Love lies uneasily,
Helped though from mortal breath,
Hushed in the arms of death,
Ill dreams around it throng;
But I a slumber-song
Sing thus, if so may be
That they from hence may flee,
Lullaby.

Lullaby, lullaby ;
Sleep soft, O love in me ;
Hadst thou indeed been drowned
Deep in the storm's Profound,
Thou hadst found better rest,
As on a Mother's breast
Rocked by the heaving sea ;
Dreams ne'er disquieting thee.
Lullaby.

Lullaby, lullaby,
Stir not so restlessly ;
Yea, as Koheloth saith,
“ Love is as strong as Death ” ;
Bursting its thrall, behold,
Chilled through with mortal cold,
Shudd'ring thou breakest free,
Quick once again in me :
Lullaby.

JUANA OF CASTILE

Vain is my lullaby ;
Vainly would sing the sea ;
Love in no depths can drown
Sunken though fathoms down ;
Neither may slumber-song
(Howso its spell be strong)
Charm it to sleep ; for thee
Death hath not, heart of me,
Lullaby.

BOOK VI

JUANA OF CASTILE

JUANA and Philippe in Granada. Coronation festivals.
Juana's continued misery. Evenings with her children.
Her last passionate appeal to Philippe insultingly repulsed.
Final rupture.

JUANA OF CASTILE

Granada holds high festival ;
The dazzling air is musical
With bells that from San Pablo's tower peal ;
Glad shouts of " Santiago " ring
Through the great square, as chosen King
And Queen of our España by Castile,
Beneath the royal canopy
We pass with pomp and priestly pageantry.

Crowned King and Queen of Spain, and known
Each unto each as such alone :
In San Benito, (robe of royalty,)
Like one led forth in deathly thrall,
I see, or great, or trivial, all,
Each sense but quickened by keen agony ;
The glittering file, the gorgeous train,
Yet more resplendent through the night of pain.

On Arab steeds (enmeshed in gold
Hung with strange orient coins of old)
Princes, Hidalgos, Ducs and Condés ride ;
White-mailed Castilian knights before
" Knights of the Cross " and " Toison d'Or."
Our Cortes with the " Nodo " at my side.
Gold trumpets blare—glad shouts arise,
Philippe and I bow, smile, in regal wise.

Granada holds high festival,
And more than ever musical
Is every bannered way and bowered street,
With cool soft splash and murmurous sound
Of crystal waters that abound ;
Or bubbling, babbling, through the noonday heat

JUANA OF CASTILE

Or in gold conduits to and fro
Rippling, pure, cold, as Guadarrama snow.

From wreathen fountains Xeres streams
In showers of sun-transmuted beams :
And purple as Love's vintage Penas flows :
With jewelled goblets pages stand
Proffering to all with ready hand.
On miradores, where Moorish arras glows,
Assemble in their loyal grace
España's noblesse—I see every face.

Lutes, harps, guitars, make melody ;
Between the bursts of jubilee
My lips find festal words for Philippe's ear ;
They speak not of their quenchless thirst,
The waters flow on as at first :
I suffer in Love's Inferno here
Amid full streams like Tantalus :
King, Queen, we smile, what is it unto us ?

Athwart the sapphire midnight sky,
The moon, her pale still face aglow,
Moves, 'mid her train of stars on high,
And in the Xenil's lucent flow
Mirrored, holds phantom court below.

From myrtle and from ilex grove
There peals tumultuous melody ;

JUANA OF CASTILE

The poignant passion and joy thereof,
(An ecstasy of agony :)
Fulfil the silent heart in me.

From bower and brake the whole night long
Impetuous in its exigence
Unsilenceable swells the song,
Aggressive in its vehemence,
Its strange inspirèd violence.

Are these but nightingales that sing ?
That hold enthralled, as by some spell,
The moonlit dark with strains that ring
Through Love's own heaven, through Love's own hell,
Whose joy and woe they strive to tell.

Nay, Philomela never sang
A song like this by Phocian seas ;
Haply on Lesbian shores it rang
From lips no mortal kiss could ease,
Nor waters of the world appease.

High noon, Seviglia reposed ;
Functions of state fulfilled
My lord had, with his arras closed,
Retired ; all sound was stilled.
Amidst the Glorieta's bowers
In shadow from the sun,

JUANA OF CASTILE

I strayed from long siesta-hours
Where rest for me was none.
Under a purple Tulip-tree
I saw, ere well aware,
His royal mantle glimmer, he
With his Basque queen stood there :
That order of the “ Golden Fleece ”
He, laughing, hers had named,
Shone on his breast (Hush thee, Heart, peace !)
While like hell-fire flamed
(Still buckled in his cap) the red
Carbuncle, given by me :
As low o’er her he bent his head,
(Peace, Heart, what aileth thee ?)
The branches swayed, his face was shown,
His eyes on her eyes gazed ;
Lightnings of scorn flashed through mine own
And sight and sense were dazed.

JUANA OF CASTILE

*It is the fairies' fête to-night ;
Film-winged they fly from Araby,
(Afar o'er an enchanted sea ;)
And this one eve of all the year
In our own Andalus appear ;
Where sometimes they, by mortal sight,
Are seen in mists of opal light,
Beneath the golden-haloed moon,
(Which will be risen very soon ;)
Would Rina like to come with me ?
There is a chance that we might see.*

*On tip-toe softly, side by side,
We pass the dim Giralda tower,
Then through the Glorieta's bower
Steal onward, till in silver haze
The fish-pool gleams ; there all the fays
At festival we find, and hide
Lest they should see us as they glide
Around the blossomed marge, or sing,
Or, light as spindrift, dance in ring ;
Then o'er the reeds and flag-flowers flit,
And tired, on water-lilies sit.*

*With elfin-laughter now close by
They wend (nor see us) to the groves,
Where feast is laid in dim alcoves ;
Quite strange our silver-birches seem !
Like trees in an enchanted dream
They shimmer 'neath a magic sky,
Glint, glimmer, as the fays draw nigh :*

JUANA OF CASTILE

*On stools of purple fungi see
Circles of these sit merrily
At mushroom-tables, gold and red,
With faery delicacies spread.*

*Of star-beams, chased, the cups are there
And silver gossamer the plates ;
Of moonshine made the choicest cates,
And crystal dew for wine they drink
That glistens mauve and green and pink ;
While some regale themselves on air,
(So we to join them should not care.)
But when the feast is o'er, enthroned
The Queen (with moonbuds crowned and zoned)
Will sit in her own opal bower,
Then comes the magic Wishing-Hour.*

*When she her moon-beam-sceptre's sheen
Holds forth, the watching fairies then
Wish in themselves once and again ;
And when she waves it, whatsoe'er
Each wished is granted him or her ;
Those mortals too who then, unseen,
Wish likewise and behold the Queen,
Of both their wishes unexpressed
Will also find themselves possessed ;
So let us think what ours shall be,
We are well hidden and should see.*

JUANA OF CASTILE

Philippe is absent ; in the joyous south
Under or sun or moon
I find no ease ; assuagement none of drouth
And wander, late and soon,
Through the Alcazar's gardens ; changed and banned
By Ahriman they seem
The accursèd pleasance of some orient land
I pace in evil dream.
Pomegranate groves all day, in sunlit bloom,
Like flames of Tartarus flare ;
And gleam like groves of Proserpine's dire doom
All night on my despair.
Yet well-springs bubble from depths underground ;
And limpid streamlets flow
Through moss-grown alleys (winding with soft sound
And laughing as they go).
Aware of one sole vehement desire
For water, at fount and rill
I seek, consumed with quenchless thirst and fire,
Assuagement vainly still :
But long I leave not even these unsought ;
The ladies of my train
Dread to approach me, deem my brain distraught,
As ever I wend again ;
Yet the gazelles ne'er timorous from me glide ;
The youngest fear me not,
And often wander softly at my side
Through grove and greensward plot.
By some dumb faculty they understand
That as for water in drought

JUANA OF CASTILE

They seek, so I ; and with cool tongues my hand
They fondle, nor misdoubt.

Up through the aspen-groves whose every leaf
For joy of the sweet sunlight laughs, a brief
Glad sound of passing melody ascends ;
The King some new festivity attends.
My ladies on the verdant terrace too
Are gay, their cunning shuttle slipping through,
While I here in my Mother's oratory
Heart-broken, Lord of Love, return to thee.
Abandoning Thy ways I wandered far
Where hell and hatred, fire and darkness are ;
I am not worthy ev'n to name Thy name ;
The passions of my heart all else o'ercame
As I departed then, my Lord, from Thee
Hast thou now likewise thus forsaken me ?
'Mid a wide waste I find nor path nor track,
Whence I have gone astray, to lead me back :
Thou knowest, (Thou who knowest the hearts of all,)
That howsoe'er of evil Powers the thrall,
My love full fain had given its life for him
It loved : full fain, to fill up to the brim
His cup, had drained its own ; poured out as dross
Its gold to profit him nor felt the loss ;
There was no way to serve, or Thou knowest well
I then had found it, though in utmost hell.
There is no way, thus seeking still in vain
My last hope dies, and over heart and brain

JUANA OF CASTILE

Darkens the desperate anguish of despair,
That drives me on toward madness (well aware
Of whither I go, and hailing it afar
As watchers of the night the morning star) ;
“ Madness ” would seem a very heaven to me,
The covert glances (I fail not to see),
The King’s, the Regent’s surmised—hope or fear ?
My ladies’ whispers (unmeant for my ear ;)
Did these touch truth, too brief eternity
Wherein to thank Thee, for this agony
Were then delirium, and, in frenzied dream
Forsaken of him I love I should but seem.
Nay from no god such mercy have I had,
Too well I know Thou knowest I am not mad.
Even Thee I doubt in my great misery,
Meseems it was a fiend-like cruelty
To fashion human love so capable
Of highest heaven and of lowest hell,
And cast it forth from Thee, an aidless birth,
To drift toward either on the passions of earth :
What fault is Philippe’s, that created so,
His love from heart to heart doth ebb and flow
Nor any steadfast anchorage finds in mine ?
If blame be his that blame is sevenfold Thine.
Nay, Lord, behold, is not the fault mine own ?
Amiss I loved ; and love at best, alone
(Howe’er a woman esteem all else as dross)
Suffices not a man, leaves sense of loss :
Mine, lacking found, contents not with its kiss
And against Thee its Maker cries for this ;
Why hast Thou made his love and my love thus ?
It is Thy will not ours that sunders us.

JUANA OF CASTILE

The wail of countless hearts, Lord, with mine own
Arises, like the dumb tempestuous moan
Of midnight seas ; Invisible, Divine
Thou art responseless, grantest us no sign,
And in my human anguish unto me
Thou dost become a Dream, illusory,
The shadow of a god ; mythic, afar ;
Yea, life, death, earth, heaven, hell, all things that are
Whelmed in the seething passion of my heart,
As in a maelstrom, are unknown apart ;
None—nothing—save my lord exists for me—
I am alone throughout eternity.

JUANA OF CASTILE

*So my Carlos wants a story
Of adventure, valour, glory,
Or of magic like those told
By Scheherazade of old.
It should last, had he his way,
Just for ever and a day :
Ne'er in Shiraz had he slept,
Through the thousand and one had kept
Wide awake ; when all were o'er
He had asked as many more ;
But as that might weary Mother—
He won't press for any other,
One—not long—the rest must keep
Caliph Carlos then will sleep.*

*Mother knows a wondrous story
Of adventure, valour, glory,
Magic likewise, all in one,
And when ended yet not done.
Listen,—it will be quite true,—
Of a man Mendoza knew.
O'er a vast and shoreless sea,
Waste on waste of mystery,
Dread and perilous, he sailed,
Fearless where his crew's heart failed :
Unknown realms, green Paradises,
Isles of gold, and groves of spices,
Drew him forward on his quest ;
Sure that land lay in the West.*

*On—o'er water-wastes for ever,
Golden isle or land gleamed never :*

JUANA OF CASTILE

*Famine, shipwreck, death were near,
Then his crew in wrath and fear
Cried upon him, "Forth from Spain
By mirage of thine own brain
Thou hast lured us" ; on him railed,
"Dreamer, Fool, thou hast outsailed
All that in the world can be
Into boundless vacancy ;
For thy garden-paradises,
Vaunted gold and gems and spices,
Shoreless leagues of weedy wrack
Ere we mutiny, turn back."*

*But he in his strong reliance
On the second sight of science,
And of genius that had led,
Held their words as if unsaid ;
Rallied, cheered them on the quest
Sure still land lay in the West.
And at length his eagle gaze
(After weary nights and days)
By Triana's lights that gleamed
Saw "a shore," he said—nor dreamed
Nearer, balmy wafts of spices
Brought the crew's lost Paradises
Back in hope :—at dawn the strand
Dimly loomed 'mid shouts of "Land."*

*"A Castilla y a Leon
Nuevo mundo dio Colon :"
More than all his dauntless quest
Sought or hoped for in the West ;*

JUANA OF CASTILE

*Crowned it ; lo, his sail was furled
On the shore of our new World ;
For that isle of " Ocean-Sea "
Led, an " Open-Sesamé,"
Unto marvels manifold
Ne'er to be in one tale told ;
They would take a thousand others
And would tire a thousand mothers
But while Carlos goes to sleep
All the rest will safely keep.*

Note. Rodrigo di Triana, it has been said, was the first in the Columbus expedition to perceive strange lights that moved to and fro ; but Columbus himself discerned a shore.

JUANA OF CASTILE

Philippe, O stand not silent thus and cold ;
Lean down and draw me to thee as of old :
Here, in thy presence, like the white waste moon
In dazzling skies of sunlit summer noon
My life is, and I shiver with strange frost
At mid of June : are the lost years so lost
That we can find them not together now ?
This is love's hour ; all lesser passions bow
Before it (as before the wild west wind
The forest trees) ; shall any its will bind,
Or spurn its sway ? were I now at thy feet
In its most utter abandon, bitter sweet,
What dead Castilian queen might dare arise
And look upon me with contemptuous eyes ?
Love is too great for scorn, too high ; disdain
At loftiest cannot reach it, were it lain
In lowest dust ; no shame in any wise
Can touch it, save 'tis shamed in its own eyes.
Come back my own beloved, come back to me,
I stretch these vacant yearning arms for thee,
Ev'n toward the Lamia's Libyan bowered strand ;
Full well her witching charms I understand,
The charmless lack in me, well, all too well ;
What couldst thou ? for thou hadst no counter-spell ;
Yet her love with its strange and sorcerous glow,
Its subtle fires, its changeful ebb and flow,
Content thee not, nor is in any clime,
Nor was nor shall be through the lapse of time,
Any to love thee quite so utterly
With such almighty love as this in me.
Will a man leave the soundless fiery deeps
Of Sirius' passion, for the flame that sweeps

JUANA OF CASTILE

A dazzling meteor-splendour o'er the skies
Then suddenly ebbs out no more to rise ?
Or follow many a wandering marish-fire
That lures him on until he sink in mire ?
Coldly you laugh and put my arms aside
Replying with light words that but deride ;
“ Ay, if you will ; ever the new allures
My way of love is mine and yours is yours :
What bee for ever doats upon one flower ?
Or finds its honey in a single bower ?
Your wild intensities of straitened love
Mine knows not,—cares not for—is weary of ;
It seeks a wider range ; full many a sweet
It fain would taste, tires of one bowered retreat ;
Fret me no more, those regions where we played
At king and queen of love, illusive fade
Before España's realms ; an end to dreams !
Henceforth let us acquit us as beseems
Castile and our imperial throne of Spain ;
Call your dueñas, nor thus here remain.”
My lips refuse to utter a reply
More dead to me than had I seen him die
My lord is ; thus insulted, love falls slain,
And my heart meets his scorn with cold disdain.

JUANA OF CASTILE

*The next part of that story
My Caliph claims to-night ;
Of Colon's world much more he
Would hear, till it is light.
Another voice ! another !
A dark—a golden head
Peeps out ! “ Tell us too, Mother,
We hid in Carlie's bed.”
Well just this one time listen,
Though tiny folk should sleep
Or when the dewdrops glisten,
And early fledglings cheep
They miss it all, not waking ;
But now afar the dark
Is unto daylight breaking
O'er Colon's anchored bark ;
With him, all four together,
In the New World we land,
Near palms, so high they feather
Like green clouds o'er the strand ;
And 'mid the green are growing,
As large as melons, nuts ;
And every tree is flowing
With wine from little cuts.
We follow through yet higher
Strange woods, that seem to rise
To heaven, and there take fire
And flame along the skies,
In red and golden flowers ;
Plants, trees in air strike root ;
Sky-gardens, hanging bowers
That bear delicious fruit ;*

JUANA OF CASTILE

*There butterflies are winging
As big as birds, and birds
Like magic gems are singing ;
Gay parrots without words,
And troops of monkeys chatter ;
These swinging from each bough
Strange fruits far downward scatter ;
We catch some ; and wend now
Through plains, where rabbits browsing
Are large as lambs and sheep ;
We pass without arousing
Myriads of cranes asleep
Here kind black people meet us
Unto whose wondering eyes
We seem “ white gods ” ; they greet us
As “ dwellers from the skies.”
We taste their roasted “ guana ”
Which, though a snake, is nice ;
And eat a crowned “ anana ”
(Pine-apple of Paradise).
Then sail,—or are we dreaming ?—
In hollowed caravels
O’er gulfs whose sands are gleaming,
Pearls hidden in their shells.
Some fishes we hear singing,
And others have four eyes ;
Some o’er calm waves are winging
In whose clear depth there lies
A magic garden, planted
With marvels of the seas ;
Flowers and fruits enchanted,
Sponge-bushes, corals trees.—*

JUANA OF CASTILE

*But night draws on, and under
Red cliffs we now spread sail
Back here again ; I wonder
If we went in a tale ?*

BOOK VII

JUANA OF CASTILE

THE brief illness of Philippe, during which Juana never left him. His death at the early age of twenty-six, Juana at the time being only twenty-five. Her refusal to believe him dead, or to leave his side, excepting when lured away by a specious pretext during the process of embalming. She subsequently causes the body to be removed to her own apartments (persisting that Philippe only slept, or had fallen into a trance). Later—refusing all idea of its interment, she treats it as if still living, even commanding the Cortes to do their customary homage to it, as to Philippe when alive. . . . At the end of one year she abandons hope.

JUANA OF CASTILE

How flushed he is ! Hyperion-like he seems,
Pillowed on western clouds in troublous dreams,
The crimson glow of wild and ominous night
Firing his face against the fleecy white,
And ravelled in restless sleep his golden locks.
Uneasily he stirs ; the vision mocks,
From his great beauty risen unwittingly,
As with strange dread, him lying thus I see.
The Court physicians laugh my fear to scorn,
All will be well, they tell me, with the morn ;
Would God I knew it ! in a woman's breast
Love waxes apprehensive ; cannot rest ;
Harbours forebodings baseless, oft times quails
At shadows like a craven : reason fails
With soothing voice, and wisest word, to charm
Its dread to sleep, or lull its wild alarm.

“ So slight an ill, none need to watch ” ; but I
Still linger : in the ante-chamber lie
The lords-in-waiting, at his call ; and sleep
Now thralls him heavily (as one drugged deep
With hemlock),—baleful sleep that brings no rest,
But weighs like some malarial vapour pressed
On weary-lidded eyes and labouring brain,
Stifling alone full consciousness of pain.
How hot he is, his hands flung out for ease
O'er the wrought coverlet, are flames in these
Of mine ; and on my mouth his glowing mouth
Is arid with the heat of desert drouth.
Left at his side in the lowered sconce's light
The golden ice-bowl glimmers on my sight :
These hands and lips of mine, that long unsought,

JUANA OF CASTILE

Nor joy nor ease of love to him have brought,
At length, in this his slumber, lend me aid
To do him service ; on the piled ice laid,
Cold thus as driven snows, they clasp his hands,
Cling to his lips ; he speaks, “ As unto sands,
Torrid with tropic heat, cool rainfall, such
Lady to me thy cool sweet mouth and touch.”
His Lamian love he sees, and suddenly
The cruel vehement fire of jealousy
Leaps to my lips, burns through my frozen hands,
And at his side a ruthless woman stands,
Who fain would now in lieu of her last kiss
With venom'd philtre quench his drouth, yet this
Were love's chief shame ; O small, weak heart in me,
Shall thy lord thirst nor water have from thee ?
Nay, whatso'er his dreams, thus seeking blind
He shall ev'n so thy full assuagement find.

Softly he sleeps—wavering athwart the night.
The wild grey shadowy dawn with fitful light,
Fills the dim chamber, and 'mid gloom and gleam
The blazoned figures of the arras seem
To quicken and stir—yea once like unto these
In firelight glamour lived Gand's tapestries ;
So long ago—æons and æons ago,—
When love was joy, not madness of wild woe.
Some other woman there it must have been
Who dreamed in her sweet fantasy I ween,
She is since dead and now, behold, betwixt
Her and myself there is a great gulf fixt,
I cannot pass forth unto her, nor she,
Strive as she may, ever return to me,

JUANA OF CASTILE

Yet as she saw my heart still seeth well ;
Still seeth well, while here in other wise
The Moorish arras quickens, and mine eyes
Behold the Cid's emblazoned Triumph move,
'Mid sweeping shadows ; ere I wit thereof
The silken maidens sing, the zithers play ;
Soft as aerial song the Cid's own lay
Floats through the chamber, and my lips retake
The cadence as lullaby, for nigh to wake
My lord turns, tosses feverishly, and fain
I thus would soothe him to soft sleep again ;

“ Si es Español
Don Rodrigue,
Español fue el,
Fuente andalla.”

Now ghastly through the glimmering dawn, in death
The mailed Cid rides, erect, but draws not breath !
Woe, woe, 'tis Philippe who thus rides meseems
Through the cold fitful glooms and timorous gleams,
And I, Ximena, wraith-like at his side,
Follow my life that in his life hath died !
Slumbering my lord groans, dominant my fear !
O God, if he should die ! have pity, hear,
Thou knowest how filled full of bitterness
Are all my years ; how lone and comfortless
Are all my weary nights and weary days,
Yet joy is left me, seeing still his face,
Hearing his voice, although in his embrace
No more I lie ; albeit I know past doubt
That light loves from his heart have cast mine out ;
Yea though my life is girt with the strange shame

JUANA OF CASTILE

Of women scorned (despite the imperial claim
Of its high birth crushed down into the dust,
And from all rights of love and honour thrust) ;
Yet it is life, for still on its dark ways
The light of his life shines ; as one who prays
Wildered in woe's extremity, I cry,
" Take him not from my sight, let him not die ;
Nay, anything but that : blind death's despair ;
For then the Universe around me were
One vast void waste, the sole existence left
Mine own, distraught with loss, of all bereft
And ever seeking through a dawnless night
The life that was its life, its world, its light,
Great Love, Lord God, I ask not Heaven's bliss
Nor ease from hell so Thou but grant me this."

Drouth and delirious pain
Through the long hours of night,
Nor cometh any ease
Unto my lord with light.
Over his fevered couch
Through the dim dawn I see
In carven beatitude
Of crucifixion, He
The Church's Love Divine ;
If such, O Christ, Thou art,
Be pitiful to mine :
Be pitiful as Thou
Thyself upon the throne

JUANA OF CASTILE

Of highest Heaven thus
Didst reign supreme, alone ;
That Heaven where love, behold,
May suffer in the stead
Of its beloved, and give
Life by its life-blood shed ;
As palms of Paradise,
Esteeming every pang ;
Beneath that dire eclipse
We, too, who love would hang,
And do but envy thee
Thy passion and Thy cross,
Thy soul's dread travail ; as gain
Would likewise count all loss
For such supremest bliss ;—
Yea, too, would face unmoved,
The powers of hell for this.

Beneath the shameful rood
(Thy throne of agony) ;
A river of life flows forth
To Thy beloved from Thee ;
Yet thou permittest not,
That we for ours should dip
Into its soundless depth,
Even the finger-tip ;
Here at Thy crucifix
My heart cries out on Thee,
While racked with cruel throes
My love, my lord, I see,
Powerless to bear his pangs,
To soothe, or from them save ;

*

JUANA OF CASTILE

Lo, Thou hast kept the one
Chief joy that heart can crave ;
Crown me with Thy sharp crown,
Grant me to share Thy death,
Let me thus bring him ease,
And life, by my last breath.
Wild words, wild prayer and vain ;
Supreme still even in this,
Thy dominant love to mine
Cedes nothing of its bliss ;
“ Help Thou, then, Christ ! ” I cry—
But silent over me
Bends in beatitude
Thy face of agony.
And dubious now my heart
Upon itself cries out
That, blind in its wild woe,
And passion of dark doubt,
It nigh had cursèd Thee ;
Yea love is known of love ;
Thine ne’er hath sought its own,
It hath no thought thereof ;
To this dread mystery
Some clue—though here unknown—
May, with the mystic key
Of Death, be Thine alone.

JUANA OF CASTILE

He suffers not ; for this in its great woe
My heart gives thanks ; unconscious to and fro
He tosses ever, and his breast oft heaves,
As doth a fluctuant sea the tempest leaves ;
While my whole life, that stands at gaze, is wrought
Into one anguished tension, passing thought ;
Exists but in his lapsing life ; ebbs, flows
With it alone, beyond it nothing knows :
Erfurt's great leech has now abandoned hope,
But love must cherish it for strength to cope
With madness.

.

In the gleaming dawn he lies

Pale now and still, his unbeholding eyes
Bent ever as in blind appeal on mine ;
His hand in my hand stirs with no mute sign
Of conscious need, but oft doth idly shift
And waver, (like a small white spar adrift
To which some drowning hope clings :) scarce aware
My heart repeats—repeats—the same wild prayer :
“ Let all be well with him if death must be,
But he loved life, O give him life for me,”
And blind despair goads faith into the shrine
Of Love, as God, Omnipotent, Divine.
More pallid with each lapsing hour he grows
And moveth never, yet hath no repose ;
Each stir of lip or eyelid, as I gaze,
Each subtle change, each tremor of life that strays
Athwart his face (though faint and swiftly sped
As is the shadow of a wind-blown shred
Of floating thistle-down) sways heavily
The balance-beam of all life is to me :

JUANA OF CASTILE

At length he moves, and seeking to arise
Uplifts himself—half consciously his eyes
Rest upon mine, then sighing soft and deep,
O'erspent he sinketh back in tranquil sleep.
Hope gazes dumb with joy no thought can tell
For if he slumber now all will be well.

Many around his couch draw nigh,
His slumber is so deep
That all misdeem him dead, but I,
I know he doth but sleep.

The Court physicians, at my word,
With close ear on his breast
Hearken ; they say no pulse is heard,
That life hath ebbed to rest.

Upon his heart mine own I lean
And listen ; loud and clear,
Above a cataract's uproar, e'en
Its least throb I should hear ;

He is not cold unto my cheek ;
There stirs a pulse at length,
(A burnt moth's wing that flutters, weak ;)
In sleep he will gain strength.

I watch beside him and I wait ;
Erfurt's great leech draws near ;
As over waters that abate,
Remote his voice I hear.

JUANA OF CASTILE

“ The slumber of the King is deep
“ Beseech you, Madame, rest,
“ Or outworn nature lacking sleep
“ Must fail your heart’s behest ;

“ I shall arouse you should he wake.”
Thus I withdraw awhile
If so be slumber, for his sake,
Mine eyes may too beguile.

I sit as frozen in some deathly dream,
At Philippe’s couch ; dim forms pass to and fro,
So they approach us not they do but seem
Shadows that come and go.
Sad strains that well might break the world’s glad heart
Wail dirge-like as at dread funereal rite,
But in the world’s heart mine hath now no part ;
I listen while (alone,
A fossil-life, entombed in glacial night ;)
It stirs not, changed to stone.

How long, how long he sleeps ; it seems to me
I watch throughout a dire eternity ;
O God ! that he would wake ! “ Why kneel ye here
Ye Kings-at-Arms as by a royal bier ?
Who hath brought thus España’s crown and sword ?
Bear them away, they will but fret your lord
When he awakes. I pray you, now retire.”
Some clue to this strange mystery I require,

JUANA OF CASTILE

Around me my dueñas weeping stand ;
To lead me forth my Father takes my hand ;
The grave physicians unto us draw near ;
“ Madame (they say) no further grief can fear,
And hope its last sad word hath longtime said ;
His Majesty hath many hours been dead ;
Beseech you accept the reverend sympathy
Of our own sorrow, and now leave it free
To render, as becomes his royal state,
All funeral obsequies inviolate.”
Nay, ye are blind, the King but sleeps ; behold,
Approach and touch his hand, he is not cold ;
It is the Queen’s will that he should be borne
To her apartments, for she laughs to scorn
The Court’s vain sorrow, and, alone, will keep
A tireless watch until he wake from sleep.

Alone with me ; my own alone again,
But like a drowned man, in my bosom lain ;
O Philippe, now thou art thus, of that before
Between us our love only doth remain.
All else is like a distant tempest’s roar
That left us wrecked upon this halcyon shore.

The while thou liest stirless, mute and blind,
These serpent-coils around my heart unwind,
And the fond words by woman’s pride unsaid,
The lost endearments it disdained to find,
I lavish on thee, for thou art as dead,
And thus we are once more as newly wed.

JUANA OF CASTILE

All softly lest thy tranquil sleep I break,
From thy cold lips my long long drouth I slake ;
And feast my heart from famine on thy face ;
In trembling miser hands thy locks I take
And strain thee close, Beloved, in my embrace ;
Mine own alone again by Love's dear grace.

Who sets at naught my royal word
That none should watch the King with me ?
The portal arras was not stirred
Yet in the lowered light I see
A woman enter noiselessly.

I shudder with unearthly fear,
So like some lovely Shade she seems
As through the dark she draws anear ;
Down to her feet her long hair gleams
As moonlight in Hadean dreams :

White poppies loose and intertwined,
She bringeth to the royal bed,
And in strange passion, fierce and blind,
(Consuming swiftly, ghostly dread,)
I stand o'er him by her deemed dead.

“ Woman, or Shade,—from hence depart,
None may approach the King save me ; ”
My words are very calm, my heart
A lava-storm ; for, lo, 'tis she
Who lured my lord by sorcery.

JUANA OF CASTILE

Half hidden in her shimmering hair,
(Yet long and glorious as of old ;)
How still she stands—how strangely fair—
Through all my veins the life runs cold ;
It is her spirit I behold.

“ Retire, your presence here profanes
My lord’s repose ; take back your flowers
Unto their low white sunless plains ;
He hath forgotten your former bowers,
Their leaf and bloom the worm devours.

“ You lured him with your beauty’s snare ;
But now so rapt in sleep he lies,
Of beauty he hath no more care ;
Nor would he wit in any wise
Though Proserpine should kiss his eyes.

“ Weeping ? What right have you to weep ?
Were your tears blood or molten flame,
Regardless he would still thus sleep ;
Dared you to wail aloud his name
He still would smile as ere you came :

“ Go—I brook not your presence here ;
My scorn had slain you verily,
Were you not that which you appear.”
She fades from view—did I but see
A vision of o’erwrought fantasy ?

JUANA OF CASTILE

All the state-coverlets of down
I pile beneath him and above,
With all the sables of the Crown
Yet hath he never warmth thereof ;
Still he is cold—cold as dead love—

But I recall me how the child
Of Housain, on the Vega slain,
Found him as chill, and o'er him piled
The tent's rich orient rugs, in vain
“ Trying to make him warm again.”

Then in her little heart she thought
“ How hot am I, he still so cold,”
Thus under the piled rugs behold
She slid and by her love self-taught
To warm him with her own warmth sought.

And with all childish cherishing,
In every artless tender way,
She strove to make her life the spring
Of quickening heat to his life ; yea
On his cold bosom long she lay.

Her tresses' rippling warmth she spread
O'er him and closelier to him pressed :
His frozen arms, despite strange dread,
She folded round her and caressed
With trembling lips his mouth and breast :

JUANA OF CASTILE

So I in my lord's bosom lie
Embracing him ; and, being bold,
That he may gain more heat thereby
His rigid arms that still withhold
All dear caress myself I fold,

As the Moor's child, about me thus ;
And my warm wealth of hair unbind
And spread it out to cover us ;
While round his neck (cold as a shrined
White marble column) my arms wind ;

Time is not, nor is night nor day,
The while by love's unwearied skill
I strive, in every varied way
If but my life through him may thrill
And thaw the frost of this dread chill.

My trembling lips, but half aware
Seek oft to warm his set, still mouth,
His pulseless breast, his dimmed gold hair
With kisses, fervent as the south
Simoom's, long parched in desert drouth.

Yet he nor moves nor wakeneth
And if I but relax my strain
One little hour, ere long, as death
He lieth rigid, frozen again ;
And all my striving seems in vain.

JUANA OF CASTILE

It is dawn, the birds flutter and cheep
In the covert ; I too wake from sleep
On thy bosom ; behold
The day rises, but night yet doth keep
Frost-bound vigil, and bitter winds sweep
From the north, where wild rack still is rolled ;
Cold—cold—cold.

The birds find no warmth in the nest,
And I shiver, Beloved, uncaressed,
For thine arms ne'er unfold
But seem arms of an effigy pressed
Evermore on an adamant breast ;
Thy set lips all their fires withhold ;
Cold—cold—cold.

“ Ay, di mi,” Zorohayda's lone sigh
Of lost love from my soul breaks—a cry
Of anguish untold ;
Thrice accursed are the hopes that belie
Their own presage when day draweth nigh
And forsake thus the heart they cajoled ;
Cold—cold—cold.

Philippe, O wake—say but one word—but stir,—
While thou art slumbering silent, moveless, there,
The Universe is dumb, all life is dead,
And o'er the heavens a pall of sackcloth spread .
O love, my love—Love's very self to me,
All that love was, is, or can ever be,

JUANA OF CASTILE

Wake ! is my heart so piteously weak
It cannot rouse thee, or constrain to speak,
Yet is so strong this boundless woe to bear ?
Dost thou not hear, beloved ? dost thou not care ?
Thou wilt not look on me, nor wake from sleep,
And I, who have no tears, that I might weep,
In desperate anguish laugh aloud, but thou
Still liest unheeding, rousest not ev'n now :
Stronger than all else is this love of mine
If Love exist not dominant, Divine,
Could such be pitiless and set its power
Against my human strength in this wild hour ?
Nay ; waken then, doth not thy heart in thee
Feel my heart breaking, maddening in me ?

Cold, rigid, mute ; with close-shut eyes,
In my embrace long—long he lies.
Yet love undaunted, prophesies
Of his awakening, and defies
The power of death—if death this be—
By its quick fire that thrills through me ;
A kindling immortality.

Ah ! mine own lord, my life's lost king,
I shudder, as to thee I cling ;
Some beautiful strange deathly thing
Thou seemest of which poets sing ;
Enchanted, terrible : behold
While in no wise my arms unfold
Their close caress, I too wax cold ;

JUANA OF CASTILE

Clay-cold and rigid ; unaware
Of all, as thou thyself art, ere
My heart awakes from mute despair,
Roused by the hope re-pulsing there :
Quick now as Love's own heart in me,
By which all hearts have come to be,
It must awake the heart in thee.

On thy set lips I fuse in this
Long, lingering, last quenchless kiss,
The whole of life that in me is,
Yea Love's own very life I wis ;
As air its fire above, beneath,
Around thee burns ; its kindling breath
Thus, on thy mouth, must quicken death.

He lives, he lives, he wakes,
Wellnigh my heart now breaks
With rapture (as with woe
So little while ago ;)
Too great to bear, its boundless joy breaks free,
And seeketh joy in all glad things that be.

It sings with all that sing,
With birds on radiant wing,
Or nested in the lea ;
With the glad honey bee
That wins the rose's heart in blossomed bowers,
And with the plain's cicala-haunted flowers ;

JUANA OF CASTILE

With all that laugh for mirth
Throughout the whole green Earth
It laughs ; with southern winds
Whose wide free joy none binds ;
With every leaf of laughing aspen trees,
With rivers, streams, and waves of summer seas.

Too great in my own heart
For life to bear apart,
Too great 'tis found for these
To give it scope or ease ;
Full-winged it soars, from finite limits free
And fills with its own bliss infinity.

O'er the dread dark as o'er primeval night
The sun has risen, quickening life and light ;
The snows have decked the earth for festival
And strewn around their faery blossoms. " Hail ! "
The winds cry, lingering on their winged way ;
We celebrate our three years' reign to-day.
The coppice birches, grouped on either hand,
Like white-mailed knights of Calatrava stand,
And rows of sapling poplars, twain and twain,
Like maidens of some Ice-queen's festal train
The long approach line from the royal gate.
To proffer homage our own Cortes wait
Audience within ; they sought my presence alone,
But now the thrilling tidings are made known

JUANA OF CASTILE

Their suzerain lives, and here, arrayed and crowned
Upon the daïs stands, his lords around ;
As was erewhile his yearly wont with me
To accept the service of their fealty.

The Chamberlain precedes them, entering ;
“ Why look ye, Sirs, so strangely on the King ?
Strengthless and pale, against the golden wall
He leaneth for support, yet on you all
With gracious welcome smiles right regally.
As unto him ye bend the loyal knee :
His hand unto your lips is haply cold,
Colder than mine, and than its wont of old,
For the high fever left him very chill,
And he is weary ; yet it was our will
Here to receive you, that your sight’s report
Should lighten the blind rumour of the Court
That long hath deemed him dead ; as ye withdraw
Speak in the city of the thing ye saw ;
Our royal thanks reward your fealty,
Joy follow you, as joy remains with me.”

Outstretched upon my knees, as one nigh done
Unto the death he lies, with wan set smile
And heavy-lidded eyes scarce closed ; the while
My love that holds for him all loves in one,
Yearns o’er him as a Mother o’er her son.

JUANA OF CASTILE

A strange protective passion wellnigh breaks
My heart with boundless pity ; on my breast
Helpless as my own babe he lies oppressed
And cannot tell what aileth him, or aches,
Thus, as my babe, I lull him unto rest.

Lullaby, lullaby
Sleep—sleep—what aileth thee ?
Weary thou art and chill,
Slumber will ease thine ill,
Luring with charm supreme
Unto fair lands of dream ;
There thou wilt find repose
Where the white lotus blows :
Heart of the heart in me
Sleep—sleep—O lullaby ;
Lullaby.

Lullaby, lullaby ;
Drowsiest melody
(Nature's own slumber-spell)
I to my song impel ;
Cadence of summer seas
Murmur of honey bees,
Cooing of mated doves,
Sighs of æolian loves
Blend in one voice to thee
Chanting soft lullaby ;
Lullaby.

JUANA OF CASTILE

Nay all is vain ; still slumberless he lies,
And I sit silent, if so be on wing
Sleep wandering near (allured not as I sing)
Through the hushed air may scatter o'er his eyes
White poppies, and repose his heart surprise.

Long, long I sit here silent and alone ;
So frozen cold upon my knees he lies
That my own body freezes in like wise ;
And changed to some Pietà, carven in stone,
To him—to me—life, death become unknown.

If thou art dead my lord, my love,
As all believe save me ;
Death is itself a sleep whereof
None knows the mystery.

BOOK VIII

JUANA OF CASTILE

JUANA at last believes Philippe to be dead, and consents to the removal of the corse into the Sacristy at Miraflores. For some time subsequent to this her strange fancies and dreams almost lead to belief in some temporary aberration of brain, in which her old predilection for Greek myth and Moorish legend is strongly accentuated. This explanation would also account for what perhaps appears too light and irrelevant in her grief, as likewise for the confusion in her imagery. Later she acquiesces in the further removal of the corse to Granada, where the royal tomb was being erected, but insists on seeing once more the face of her husband, for which purpose the coffin is opened. The funeral *cortège* proceeds (always by night, on which she insists), she herself accompanying it and following close to the bier.—Tragic scene at dawn on the wild plain of Toro, occasioned by the bier having been taken by misadventure into a nunnery in lieu of a monastery.—Meeting with Ferdinand near Tordesillas.—He succeeds in persuading her to retire into its Castle, and to allow the coffin of Philippe to be placed in the Convent of Santa Clara, opposite her windows.

JUANA OF CASTILE

Dead—dead—he is quite dead ; blind Hope undone
Forsakes me ; Death hath now unveiled her eyes,
Silenced her dauntless soothsayings each one.
He is quite dead ; he will not stir nor rise
Nor waken any more in any wise ;
And since, of life beyond, life nothing knows,
Lest I should harm him, holding him thus mine,
And stay his soul perchance from full repose,
He shall be laid at Death's most hallowed shrine,
From love's despair withdrawn, to Love's Divine.
As is the hush profound beneath the sea,
So silent and stirless is the heart in me ;
Passions convulse it nevermore again,
Weak as spent surf they seem—no storm can be
In an illimitable agony.

“ *Lacrymosa dies illa
Qua resurgat ex favilla ;
Judicantus homo reus,
Huic ergo parce deus ;
Pie Jesu Domine
Dona eis requiem.* ”

Through the dark devoutly steal
(Fraught with strange and dread appeal ;)
Strains of priestly requiem, pray
O my heart in thine own way :

“ In the night of desperate sorrow
Dawning never unto morrow,
Where both heart and spirit break ;
And our love's supreme endeavour

JUANA OF CASTILE

Fails, must fail, we know, for ever ;
Landmark, loadstar from us taken
Earth's foundations round us shaken ;
While the pillars of heaven quake
Unto our full selves we wake ;
Life's whole passions, life's whole powers,
Every pulse of being ours
Centred in one agony :
If the Lord of Love thou be

Pie Jesu Domine

Miserere !

“ Blind we stand before the ages,
Blind our seers and blind our sages ;
(Faith a dread agnosticism ;)
Vain their vision and wisdom vaunted ;
Love, though likewise blind, undaunted
Joyful issue prophesieth ;
All the augury belieth.
We are Doubt's by cup and chrism,
Heaven reels down Hell's abysm ;
Life and death alike confound us,
All is dark, above, around us ;
Dark as time, eternity ;
If the Lord of Love thou be

Pie Jesu Domine

Miserere !

“ Fear nor daunts, nor hope constrains us,
One sole issue now remains us,
One sole dawn the dark may bear ;
If the Day-spring thou of Heaven,

JUANA OF CASTILE

If the Sun that shines as seven,
O'er the night of desolation,
Rise the Day of restoration ;
As by ' angels unaware '
(' Loss,' ' Doubt,' ' Agony,' ' Despair ')
Goad us on, with fire and sword,
To that End of Love as Lord
When it ' all in all ' shall be :
Faithless, blind, we cry to thee
Pie Jesu Domine
Miserere ! ”

'Tis midnight ; through the dim translucent haze
The risen moon of Miraflores gleams,
O'er tracts of blossomed crocus ; all the ways
Are white with shining mist, and substance seems
But shadow ; wearily the faint wind blows,
As through some realm of Hades in repose.

All sleep within ; beyond this gleaming mead
My lord sleeps ; lacking him no rest I find
In Hades (if this Hades be indeed) ;
But like a lost Shade, sleepless, seeking blind
The foregone light, now grope my way to him
Over the moonlit flowers and white paths dim.

Here in the sculptured sacristy, I know,
Amid the cold strange carven effigies
He sleeps—the sleep of death—yea even so,

JUANA OF CASTILE

Stirless and mute as they he slumbering lies ;
Yet I live but by him ; if I still live
Then must his lapse from life be fugitive.

Death is a god withdrawn in awful night
No sunrise cheers the watcher at His shrine ;
But dark was Delphi's fane and never light
Entered the Oracle of El's Divine :
Here with Philippe I wait ; though darkness gird
High gods, their voice is oft at midnight heard.

JUANA OF CASTILE

*All is attuned to music, glad or dread,
Saving the soundless silence of the dead ;
Love, that hath lost its loved at last
(Knell, wail of woe and " de Profundis " past !)
Sets to some desolate monotony ;
The dreary moaning of a tideless sea.*

JUANA OF CASTILE

At the banquets of Love, as at banquets of gods, in the
past

Ambrosia and nectar were mine ; now I wander outcast
Through the desolate Earth (though my life is gone forth
with my lord's)

And none to my thirst ev'n one calyx of Lethe accords.
Thus of hellebore, ofttimes I drink, that in sleep if so be
I may likewise descend into Hades from substance set
free.

O'er and o'er I there seek him in vain, but in vision
to-night

Through fields asphodelian we wended in shadowy de-
light,

Ghost with ghost in a region of Shades ; yet our hearts
had repose,

Till the temperate wind in wild tempest around us arose ;
Like the sound of the wings of the cherubim heard by the
seer

When in "visions of El" by the Chebar he saw them
appear ;

Like the sound of imponderous seas in the storm of a
dream ;

Or of mighty tempestuous gales, as they sweep through the
gleam

Of vast forests in autumn, and shrieking and sobbing, lay
waste

The splendours of summer ; when myriads of leaves by
them chased,

Like flocks of bright birds flee on high ; or in eddies
around

Are whirled from the drifts of dead seasons, aglow on the
ground.

JUANA OF CASTILE

So meseemed in that tempest of Hades were driven on
the blast,
Or in eddies upwhirled by the wind from deep drifts of the
past,
All hours of all seasons elapsed ; in the bud and the prime
And the wane of their glory, all hours of dead ages of Time.
Unassuaged, and unsilenced, the shadowy tempest swept on,
Full of wailings and voices phantasmal of life there fore-
gone.
The dim past of the myriad manes was quick on the air,
The dim past, once our own (its delights and its sorrows)
was there ;
Wellnigh borne on ourselves by the blast we sought ever in
vain,
To allure to our hearts the lapsed hours of lost joyance
again :
All, all was illusion, and impotent ghosts in the shades,
Very weary we wandered, until I described 'mid dim glades,
Where narcissi and asphodel bloomed in perpetual flower,
And the poppies were white o'er the glimmering fields, a
green bower
In fair covert from storm ; there we entered, and poppies
I piled
For his pillow and lullaby sang till in slumber he smiled.

A fair white carven glory at last
Within Granada waits the tomb ;
Athwart the periods of the Past,
Whose age of Love doth ne'er decline,

JUANA OF CASTILE

Caria's memorial splendour loom ;
O Artemisia, could I shrine
My King as thou the memory of thine.

“ Granada,” at that witching word
In dark Despair's dread Cave of Night,
As at Arabian “ Sesame ” heard,
Barred doors unclose on glint and gleam
Of Hope's rare treasures lost to sight,
“ Granada ” home of orient Dream,
Where mystery and magic reign supreme.

Its spell prevails, and I recall
How on the Vigil of St. John,
Released from death's enchanted thrall,
King Boabdil holds court each year,
Deep in the Mountain of the Sun ;
And his dead Moors afar and near,
Throughout the whole dim land in life appear.

Thither they speed with soundless haste,
By shadowy grove and glimmering stream ;
O'er star-gemmed hill, and moonlit waste
On their own Arab coursers fleet ;
Or where gold mosque and minaret gleam,
Down many a dusky lamplit street,
And mazy path, press on with silent feet.

The magic Vigil now draws nigh ;
Perchance in that great wakening stir
Within the City itself, where lie
So many Moors, in death as deep,

JUANA OF CASTILE

My lord might waken ; we will bear
Him hence and there the vigil keep :
With Boabdil he may arise from sleep.

Since, with my lord, life died for me,
Since his closed eyes shut sight
From mine, forbear the mockery
Of outer life and light.

Filled full of darkness is my heart
My soul in death is bound ;
The *cortège* must by night depart,
No stir of life around.

In harmony let all be done,
Like unto like ; yea light
To those whose eyes can see the sun,
But night to death's dark night.

Yet once again, Belov'd, mine eyes have sight,
For the last time I look upon thy face,
(Like one who knows he looks his last on light
And will henceforth for ever dwell in night).
“ Philippe ”—unanswered, echoless, my cry
Rings on, meseems, through boundless voids of space ;
Thou dost not hear me though I stand so nigh ;
My kisses on thy lips have no reply ;

JUANA OF CASTILE

Though my hand trembles in thy clustered hair,
Of it, of me, thou liest unaware ;
Thou art as if thou wert not :—dead, quite dead ;
But in my dreams thou livest, I find thee there.
Within Granada hallowed rest were thine ;
There kinglier pillow waits thy royal head ;
We bear thee hence ; at whatsoever shrine
Thou may'st be laid I know thou still art mine.

Now unto thee
Is death and the night ;
Now unto me
Mid-darkness for light :
On my lips, though mortality lingers, my life hath with
 thine lapsed from sight.

The dead with the dead,
As a ghost by thy bier
I wend, while the tread
Of the bearers I hear,
And the priest's chanted requiem, and see the red torches
 oft flicker and veer.

O'er the plateau we wind
Through dread silence profound ;
Moon and stars wander blind
In black heavens ; and around
Frozen, stirless, and rigid, with cerements of darkness the
 Earth is enwound.

JUANA OF CASTILE

In thy death is extinct
The life that inspired ;
With which all was instinct ;
The spirit that fired
With a glory of light, and of passion all Nature, in thy
breath expired.

Lo, a universe dead ;
The heavenly host
Quenched fires o'er thy head ;
One with me through the frost
They yet follow thee, as on that night when their fires
in my heart's fire were lost.

To thy life all converged,
Centred there in delight ;
With me all is merged
In thy burial rite :
Death is God ; an unutterable horror is here of cold—
silence—night.

Slowly onward we wend
Through the desolate waste,
That thy form may be shrined
And thy spirit embraced
At the Church's high altar of Love and no longer at mine
be abased.

“ Love ”—ere that sound,
Echoed soul-ward expire
O'er the frozen profound
Of my heart, lo, its dire
Intense Antenoran frost burns, a white heat of intolerable
fire.

JUANA OF CASTILE

In the subtle clear flame
Life, death, hope, fear, despair
Fuse and blend, while the same
Pallid fire seems to flare
From the planetary host, and they tremble as kindled by
it unaware.

And the Earth, stark and cold,
In her shroud quails from stone
As on Her heart lay hold
The dread pangs of my own ;
Is it love's phoenix-pyre that prevails ? burning thus in
its desert alone ?

All lapses, the dawn
Shivers grey in the gloom ;
Moon and stars are withdrawn ;
Monasterial towers loom,
There we wend into chantry till nightfall, by ways where
white asphodels bloom.

Women—women—soft-eyed women, very fair and young
and sweet,
Flit through glimmering hall and portal, shadow-like with
soundless feet ;
Is it some Hadean vision fretting thus my tortured brain ?
Is the pile some Lamian palace by enchantment raised again ?
Round the catafalque they gather, murmuring low :—this
shall not be,

JUANA OF CASTILE

Even now they may have stolen my dead lord away from me ;
Borne the bier must be from hither, back unto the desert
plain,

There the royal argent opened, I must see his face again,
Lest he should be there no longer, lest some woman like to
these

Should have stolen him already ; and outstretched upon
her knees,

In her secret bower he lieth, her arms round him in his sleep ;
While we here a vacant vigil through the long hours vainly
keep.

.

Glacial as the deathly Sansar, o'er the waste the wild
winds blow ;

Round the bier the flambeaux waver, flaring high and
flickering low ;

While the censured incense curling lingers frozen o'er my
dead,

And the cold faint lurid sunrise glints athwart his golden
head.

All is well, as erst he sleepeth ; cold he knows not, calm,
supine ;

No fair woman of those hath touched him ; none have
kissed his lips since mine ;

Priests shall close the gleaming argent, and new requiem
here shall rise,

Lest his soul's repose their presence hath profaned in any
wise.

.

JUANA OF CASTILE

“ *Pie Jesu Domine*
Dona eis requiem
Eis requiem
Dona, Dona
Eis requiem
Requiem æternam.”

“ Hush thee, heart, restrain thy throbbing,
Thou wilt shake thy lord’s repose,
As a woman’s anguished sobbing
Shakes the calm of one who goes
Forth with Death, from mortal woes.

“ Hush thee, harken, requiem rises ;
Lo, the Christ uplifted ; see,
He in some strange wondrous wise is
Love in vanquished agony :
Pray ; perchance he God may be.”

.

On—on—on—it seems for ever, through the long low
barren plain ;
Winds around us moaning, shrieking, like pent souls in
penal pain :
On—still on—shall I find never even that foregone dread
rest,
With my dead in Death’s calm presence ? there alone of
him possessed.
By the dreary sluggish river, black, Cocytian, we wend ;
Leagues afar Granada glimmers, and the way hath never
end.

JUANA OF CASTILE

Full of grief my Father meets us ; urges tarrying and
repose,
And, hard by, the lichened Castle of grey Tordesillas
shows ;
In its precincts "Santa Clara," where in cloistered
sanctuary
My dead lord might likewise tarry, where still near him
I should be ;
Takes my hand and leads me thither, like a tired bewildered
child,
Heavy, stupefied with sorrow ; from some futile quest
beguiled.

BOOK IX

JUANA OF CASTILE

AT Tordesillas. Juana remains there many years ; never leaving the precincts of the Castle until her death. During this time Henry VII. of England (who had admired her so much when at his Court with Philippe) proposes for her hand, others do so likewise ; but she discountenances all, being entirely absorbed in the memory of her husband, whose body always remained during her lifetime in the Convent of Santa Clara, opposite the Castle windows. Interview with Philippe. Her later days, which are said to have been haunted by evil visions. Her death.

JUANA OF CASTILE

At length the charm of waving hands,
And paces interwoven, taught
Unto the king of orient lands,
And by him on his Queen then wrought,
The spell oft proved in part on me
Is wrought in its entirety ;
And lost to life and use, as she,
I dwell in an enchanted Tower :
Escape is none, spell-bound both power
And will to strive for liberty ;
The dead, in catacombs long lain
More simply might for issue strain :
As sight to her was blind and vain,
Saving for him who wrought the spell,
So here with my dead King I dwell
And can behold none else again.
Around my Tower the world I know
Is wide, and there o'erwhelmed with woe
Are other women ; could I go,
And weep for their great grief with them,
Or the salt tide of sorrow stem
Easier were mine and worthier so.
But like a broken stone my heart
Is left to lie for ever apart.
Lost unto life and use and throne,
A realm of air the realm of Spain
Appears to my bewildered brain ;
Its people's call illusory, blown
From shores phantasmal o'er a sea
Wherein I sink eternally.

JUANA OF CASTILE

*There was an image in Crete
White marble from brow unto feet ;
Stirless through ages of old
Silent as death and as cold,
In Mount Ida it stood, and nor sorcerer nor sage could its
mystery unfold.*

*A marvel, a maiden more fair
Than ever mortality bare :
Less lovely (tho' girt with her zone)
Cytherea if changed into stone
By some strange inconceivable anguish of love unto mortals
unknown.*

*Chiselled by Art's subtlest mage,
Or born in a mythical age,
And froz'n by immortal despair ;
Statue-like, upright, there
Hidden in the crypt of the Earth, of time and of change
unaware.*

*Stirless she stood without moan,
Through cycles of darkness, alone ;
Yet ever she wept ; thus her pent
Intolerable anguish found vent ;
Wept from eyes and from breast and from heart ; for her
bosom of marble was rent.*

*Ever the dripping of tears,
Falling through centuries of years ;
Tears that naught mortal might quell,
That were fire, that were blood as they fell,
Or colder than death, and became the dread source of the
rivers of hell.*

JUANA OF CASTILE

*O the passion, the woe, the despair,
The unutterable love hidden there,
Its mystery is solved yet by none ;
The maiden—or statue—is gone ;
Her tears fall alone in my song ; but through hell the dread
rivers flow on.*

Note. See Dante's "Inferno," Canto XIX.

JUANA OF CASTILE

With my dead lord in the white fane of Death
I live, for death is now my life to me ;
The form that bears my name and still draws breath
Some other woman seems ; here oft I see
Shekinah-like the god's own presence shine
And I have grown to trust in His Divine.

Death is the great Life-Giver ; like those Powers
By which Hellenic deities had birth,
He quickens all dead and fallen gods of ours,
Sets them again on high ; creates new Earth
And Heaven, wherein no more to mind
Comes sorrow for their glory once declined.

How dark it is ; bewildered, blind, I seem
To wake as in my childhood from some dream
Of midnight horror ; yet no sleep was mine,
And through the chill impervious murk supreme,
The futile noonday sun essays to shine.

The Valley of the Shadow of Death is this ?
Where in the dusk more dense than dark, I miss
Ever my way, and Phantasms of the mind,
Powers, Presences, winged Dreams of the Abyss,
Beset my soul that wrestles with them, blind.

JUANA OF CASTILE

Legions of evil portent, yet through all
One dominant dread doth my whole being thrall,
Lest well with Philippe dead it should not be ;
Wildly I cry, " Let not thy judgments fall
On him, Lord Love, but O in lieu on me."

At wrestle still with these dire Powers of Night
Vainly I strive to him—no ray of light—
Yet to the utmost I in Love believe ;
All will be well with him in their despite,
Unto the utmost, Love will all retrieve.

Henry of England seeks my hand ; at last
Philippe, the latent passion of the past,
So long time silent between thee and me
(At the tranquillity of death aghast :)
By this strange insult to thy memory
Rekindled, like a geyser in mid-ice,
Seethes at my heart. The years have waned but thrice
Since love last listened for thy voice and heard ;
Æons—eternity—would not suffice
That it should brook from other lips one word ;
True, thou art dead ; thus I am as thou art,
We are from other loves withdrawn apart ;
I scarce can stoop from scorn to answer this,
On thy set lips mine kissed their final kiss.

JUANA OF CASTILE

Ah love ! Ah love !
The seasons wax and wane,
Storms rage or cushats coo,
While hearts thy name profane,
And deem thy seasons too
Lapse, live again ;
They ring the changes through the year—" 'tis dead
Then live the new year the new seasons instead."
Ah love ! Ah love !

Ah love ! Ah love !
Thou art no bird whose strain
Is hushed o'er its dead mate
In autumn's wane,
Yet scarce full spring doth wait
To nest again ;
Thy lord is dead, thou can'st take none in lieu ;
Thou lovest once and never more anew.
Ah love ! Ah love !

Ah love ! Ah love !
No transient thing hath part,
Nor future is, nor past
Within thy heart ;
There life doth death outcast,
As God thou *art* :
" Wed thee again, thy lord is dead " ; too fine
Death's difference to thee, he still is thine ;
Ah love ! Ah love !

JUANA OF CASTILE

After the lava-fire outbreking
With mighty pangs the Earth's heart shaking,
A deep tranquillity around ;
After the tempest of the Ocean
Tumult of winds, tameless commotion,
An elemental peace profound.

Lulled to like calm, as one storm-driven
On shores Hadean, and newly shriven
From mortal passion and pain I seem ;
After the fire and tumult, after
The wildered anguish, moan and laughter
Appear as one, and vague as dream.

No power love from love divorces ;
Invincible amid all forces,
By that strange magnetism its own,
So calm now though so broken-hearted,
Lo it draws back its loved, departed,
Discarnate, from the Unseen Unknown.

Philippe, unto thy presence waking,
The desert drouth within me slaking,
I see thee—in no dream—again ;
A fire of Love's own shrine thy face is,
And straining toward thee my embrace is,
No longer fearful of disdain.

Stay, stay with me, Beloved, go not !
If thou art in the spirit I know not !
Say only, is it well with thee ?
Quickened as one the last day raiseth,
My life enthralled on thy life gazeth,
Nor wits if in the body we be.

JUANA OF CASTILE

A fuller love my own is learning
Where nor pent passion is, nor yearning,
Nor pain, nor aught of mortal birth ;
Part rapture and part wonder seeming,
'Tis like a love that poets dreaming
Might know perchance in loves of Earth.

See my whole being yearns and trembles ;
Thy voice, thy own voice none dissembles,
Thrills through my soul once more at last,
And heart to heart we have communion
Transcending mortal thought or union,
And all life craved for in the past.

While rapt beyond all Earth's emotion
My life swells (an empyreal ocean),
Thou drawest yet more near, and now
In some yet closer, sweeter, higher,
Strange love of pure æonial fire—
Lo ! thou art I, and I am thou.

My women tell me many years
Have dawned and darkened over me
In Tordesillas ; they seem tears
Dropped in a soundless, shoreless sea ;
Time is become eternity.

JUANA OF CASTILE

Earth is for me but Philippe's tomb.
Rest is not, save when I repair
And kneel in Santa Clara's gloom,
Of all things transient unaware,
And oft he cometh to me there.

JUANA OF CASTILE

*All life knows sleep and death, save only love,
Which is as God eternally awake,
Deathless as He : whate'er the woe thereof
Its heart too is as God's and cannot break.*

JUANA OF CASTILE

“ Would God that it were dawn ” at dark I pray ;
“ Would God that it were eve ” at dawn of day :
Intolerable alike the dark and light
And evil visions haunt me day and night ;
Ev’n now, awake I dream, and see a star
To earth from heaven fall, thence downward far ;
Its king is my king and I follow where
A “ smoke of torment ” darkens sky and air ;
(The blinding fume of Love’s abysmal hell ;)
There I descend, still following where he fell ;
Through flaming reek the fiery serpents hiss,
But the birds’ carols in the bowers of bliss
Were harsher music, for ere long I see
Him who is very Heaven in Hell to me,
Though at his side the Lamian woman stands,
Weeping and wailing, wringing her small hands.
He is not hers ; she shall not o’er him weep,
She shall not watch thus o’er his anguished sleep ;
Yet tears may ease him in his burning pain,
Tears—even one such Dives craved in vain ;
And I have none, my own were long ago
At their source frozen ; could they thaw and flow
They were like molten lava : quick and cold
Hers fall upon his brow, his lips ; behold
I will not stay her weeping ; would that she
A fountain were to flow perpetually ;
But in the fume she changes (as of old
The Lamia) to a serpent, crowned with gold,
That hath a woman’s face most wondrous fair,
And a gold glory of long glittering hair,
Hair of a woman, as had those direful things
That rose from Hell’s great reek with scorpion stings,

JUANA OF CASTILE

In dread apocalypse to torture men ;
And “ power is hers to hurt ” as theirs was then ;
Yea now such torment strikes from her through me
That all is lost in one blind agony.

Thank God, the long dread night of life is past,
And lulled by His narcotic, thus, at last,
I dream the latest dream that mortal may
The dream of death, that comes at dawn of day.
Storm and tumult ; the sound of tempestuous waves and
wild wind :
In mine ears the loud roaring of surf, and with darkness
made blind,
By the hurricane’s blast on the grey northern ocean again
I am driv’n—but alone now—alone—Philippe comes not
as then ;
Up on high the waves bear me ; then gulphed in them,
downward I sink ;
Downward—downward—the while of the white, seething
surges I drink ;
Yet my soul is at one with the storm, as it was on the night
When we drave on the dim Cornish coast in the glimmering
light ;
And at length it meseems that I drink, O my lord, there
with thee,
Of the potent and sorcerous wine from the cup of the Sea ;
The one only philtre remaining for us even then
That so love, sunken deep yet undrowned, we might find
once again.

JUANA OF CASTILE

O'er the tumult of waves and of winds, through the darkness
I hear
A low call—my own name—but bewildered I listen ; and
clear
Though the voice through the uproar is heard, I still know
not who calls ;
Philippe ?—Love ?—or The Christ ? and the wine of the
ocean bethralls
Soul and body in stupor ; but swiftly my heart (dumb
and cold)
Leaps up wild as from death, and strains forth in response ;
as of old
With the storm of its passion commingling the storm of the
sea,
Finding scope in the elements, fusing their ferment in
me.
From the spell of the Orient Tower broken free, with the
wind
And the billows it blends in one tempest, invincible, blind,
Boundless, fathomless ; storm within storm, every depth,
every height,
Convulsed in one passion that strives toward the voice
through the night.
Closer now, calm and clear o'er the turmoil the call comes
again,
And the ocean upgathers its uttermost forces at strain
In one mighty tumultuous tide, beating up in reply,
With the hurricane's blast, for my life is now they ; they
are I.
Soft, O soft, the strange tempest abates ; as a sea that hath
found
A wide harbour and calm at the last : with a lullaby sound

JUANA OF CASTILE

The wild waves ebb to rest ; and the hurricane's blast o'er
the deep
Is as gentle and low as the breath of an infant asleep.
Dimly looms, through the glimmering dawn, a fair shore ;
while above,
And around, and below, all is rest—all is peace—all is love.

Lullaby, lullaby
Sleep soft O heart in me ;
Hushed is the storm of life
Wild winds fold wing from strife ;
Love's surging deep at last
(Passion's pent tumult past,)
Breaks on a boundless shore ;
Tempests thus rage no more :
—All is at rest in me—
—All is tranquillity—
But—blind I—fail to—see—
What—ha—ven—this—may—be.

COSMO VENUCCI, SINGER, AND OTHER POEMS

Notices of the Press

“THE romance of an operatic star”—a tenor, we must suppose, who has undertaken many amatory parts on the lyric stage—is the theme of *Cosmo Venucci, Singer*; and with considerable command of melody and fervour is it invested by the poet. From La Scala even unto San Carlo does Cosmo Venucci sing in impassioned strains of the charms of the adorable, not-impossible She, and his singing is so fervid and, on the whole, so convincing, that we are delighted to know in the end that his raptures find rest in victory. There are some fine and true notes of passion in Miss Earle’s lyrical interludes; and the verse generally is the verse of a poet, not the verse of the verser.—*Saturday Review*.

“May Earle” is the author of poems which, though as fulfilment they cannot satisfy, are sufficiently remarkable, if the book is a first one, to be considered of promise quite exceptional among the many new books of well-composed verse, which are the daily products of the present literary period. *Cosmo Venucci, Singer, and other Poems*, is not a work on which a poet’s reputation could be founded; its style is too flamboyant But underneath the surface of faults there seems to be what will wear through that crust and demolish it and show itself as unaffected poetic energy. When restraint and refinement have become so general as to be almost inevitably imitated by readers when they proceed to be writers, the faults of a less prevalent school may be hailed as something indicating more originality of mind than if the writer had assimilated the manner of the day. Flamboyance, when not merely the result of assimilation or of conscious imitation, may be a better augury of right richness when chastening comes than conventional moderation. Cosmo Venucci is an Italian opera singer who, in many stanzas of varied measure, tells diary fashion his love-tale—how at first his soul was possessed by art alone, then by her—how he found his hopes a delusion, for she had loved, not the man, but the singer—

how after a weary exile, away singing in the sunless countries of the North, he came back a greater singer, and she loved him, and they married. . . . On the whole the emotional continuity of the story is well sustained. Space will not allow of quotations to show the present nature of May Earle's poetry ; and, indeed, a critic who accounts her higher by what she may do than by what she has done cannot feel that detached passages will convey anything of the impression caused by the whole : but we should like to give this pretty song-like bit, which is wedged between a description of Florence put in on the ground that Cosmo thought She was there, though she was not, and another of Fiesole, where it turned out that she was while he was admiring Florence as her then residence :

In the sky for sunlight is cloud,
And silence for song of the bird ;
The wind in the woodland sighs,
The sunless grey river replies,
And the lilies' heads are all bowed
As the sough of the storm is heard.

Dear, the dawn was more sweet than the day,
The bud than the blossoming flower,
The promise of noon than the noon
That shone and was shadowed so soon ;
The winds had but led me astray,
And the sun had mistaken thy bower.

. . . Twelve sonnets *To my Master* have a vividness and energy which make them very interesting.—*Athenæum*.

There is no little forcible and even poetical rhetoric in these verses. The rhythmical swing of the lines not unfrequently reminds us of Mr. Swinburne himself. . . . This is distinctly a book of promise.—*Spectator*.

There is good promise in May Earle's *Cosmo Venucci, Singer, and other Poems*. Every evidence is here of power and capacity for musical expression in the poem which gives its title to the volume ; while *The Suicide's Wife* is instinct with a tender pathos. In *A Phase of*

Agnosticism we have ingenious utterance of some of the current types of thought on theological matters.—*Graphic*.

Cosmo Venucci, Singer, is not only melodious and graceful, but thoughtful, and fertile in material for thought. Its philosophy is pessimistic, but there are gleams of sunshine through its darkest clouds, and even such gloomy places as *A Phase of Agnosticism* and *A Suicide's Wife* are not wholly in a minor key.—*Morning Post*.

Both passion and music . . . burned through and through with the sun of Italy . . . contains passages of great sweetness and beauty.”—*Scotsman*.

The value of the poems is not to be found in the story, but in the poetic wealth in which it is wrapped as in a garment of music, fire, and passion.—*Glasgow Herald*.

THE QUEST OF FIRE

The Quest of Fire, by May Earle, is the work of a lady who once again shows her capacity to write strong and original if somewhat rugged verse.—*The Times*.

This small collection of poems contains some of unusual merit—of the presence of a genuine poetic gift no reader can remain doubtful. Both the substance and technique of the piece here printed displays true poetic genius. *The Modern Marsyas* is a poem of which no poet need be ashamed. Happily Miss Earle has too much indigenous poetry to be an echo of any of the greater singers, and both in the kind of subjects which attract her and in her way of looking at them her independency and originality are proclaimed.—*British Weekly*.

There is a great deal of imagination in these charming poems ; thought, feeling, and inspiration often reaching a high level of beauty. *The Kingdom of Love* is most fertile of passion and music, with a certain vividness of energy that force themselves on the reader. The same author's *Cosmo Venucci, Singer*, it will be remembered, instantly attracted attention when it appeared. *The Quest of Fire* shows a considerable advance in artistic perception on the previous effort, being far more dignified and easy ; the effective toning down of the slightly spasmodic and exaggerated emotional manifestations being apparent. Miss Earle has before her a career.—*Whitehall Review*.

The longest and most ambitious poem in the volume, *At the Shrines of Nature*, is an ode or series of odes celebrating a refined sort of Nature-worship or Pantheism, and written with an impetuous sweep of verbal melody which irresistibly suggests recollections of Swinburne and loses nothing by the comparison. The other pieces have a like soaring character and rise to regions of the imagination where what in plain speaking is called "sense" is apt to be lost sight of in a profusion of glowing imagery.—*Scotsman*.

A very promising volume of verse. Marked at every turn by indisputable evidence of inspiration.—*The Quest of Fire* is the quest of poetry, and in its pursuit Miss Earle gives proof that she possesses plentiful imagination and, with intervals of crudity, a musical voice. Her metres are modelled upon Swinburne and she has chosen a hard master ; in consequence there are occasional breaks in the melody

which argue that Miss Earle's ear is apt to fail her, but despite these momentary lapses the book is one of great promise.—*Sun*.

The Quest of Fire by May Earle introduces us to a sweet singer who has a distinct poetic gift. Brooding thought and a true culture characterise Miss Earle, and her rhythm if not varied is free and fascinating. The chief poem, *At the Shrines of Nature*, is conceived in a large and striking manner. Miss Earle's child-pieces are capital.—*Christian Leader*.

JUL 1 1911

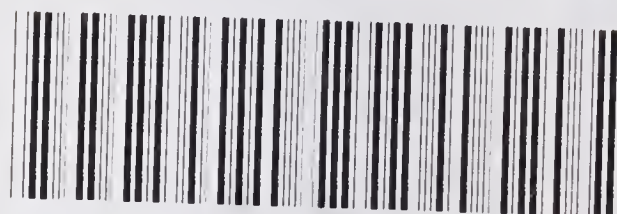
Deacidified using the Bookkeeper process.
Neutralizing agent: Magnesium Oxide
Treatment Date: June 2009

Preservation Technologies

A WORLD LEADER IN COLLECTIONS PRESERVATION

111 Thomson Park Drive
Cranberry Township, PA 16066
(724) 779-2111

LIBRARY OF CONGRESS



0 014 678 354 5

